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Reese, Justin Y.

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

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THESIS

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, STATE BUILDING, AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR EMERGING STATE ASSISTANCE

by

Justin Y. Reese

December 2008

Thesis Advisor:	Marcos (Mark T.) Berger
Second Reader:	Dorothy Denning

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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

The U.S.-led effort to form transnational institutions and processes contributes to the decreasing relevance of the nation-state in relation to what has become known as globalization. Globalization has modified the essential role of the nation-state towards managing global flows of resource, capital, and populations rather than, as in the past, presiding over distinct national economies. The relationship between ICT and political stability is explored in order to determine the existence of a positive, negative, or non-existent correlation in the Asia Pacific Region for 2007. The importance of distinct ICT policy design is examined via case studies of Myanmar and Malaysia. Building from these case studies a regional approach to state building is outlined as offering a way beyond the current impasse in the theory and practice of state building. The regional framework for emerging state assistance, which is proposed reinforces transnational process, makes substantive use of existing ICT, and builds upon ideas of locality to further security and development. The Hourglass Model, which is the schematic basis for the regional approach, could facilitate state building by balancing global processes with local security and development concerns. This approach enables the processes of capacity development and consensus building to take place at the transnational level, while reinforcing the shift of sovereignty upwards from the state to the regional framework and downwards to the local sub-national level. The utility of ICT as an enabler for efficiency, transparency, and accountability makes clear the viability of such an approach.

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INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, STATE BUILDING,
AND GLOBALIZATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: REGIONAL
FRAMEWORKS FOR EMERGING STATE ASSISTANCE

Justin Y. Reese
Major, United States Army
B.A., Michigan State University, 1997

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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December 2008

Author: Justin Y. Reese

Approved by: Professor Marcos (Mark T.) Berger, Ph.D.
                 Thesis Advisor

                 Professor Dorothy Denning, Ph.D.
                 Second Reader

                 Professor Gordon H. McCormick, Ph.D.
                 Chairman, Department of Defense Analysis

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I.   INTRODUCTION

I developed an interest in the relationship between Information Communication Technology (ICT), state building, and globalization during my participation in the U.S.-led Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). A dominant theme in western Baghdad, where I was posted, was the desire for technological connectivity by the population. Every structure from a single-family home to apartments with multi-family dwellings had satellite dishes. In addition to this, the vast majority of the Iraqi population that I encountered over the course of a yearlong deployment owned at least one cell phone, whose utility went far beyond its primary function as a means of communication. During my time there, it was impossible not to notice the pace of technological diffusion and the desire on the part of the population for more access and further capacity. A single-family dwelling, which might have none of the modern conveniences such as a refrigerator, oven, dishwasher, sink, automobile, still had a large functioning television set in an empty room with a dirt floor, around which the family huddled to ascertain their place in the global community. Over the course of discussions, Iraqis would almost always produce a cell phone to show photo albums, videos taken to document important family events, or play a new hit song or video. In other cases, young adults would take you to their computers and demonstrate their participation in chat rooms with citizens from around the world from the comfort of their homes or Internet cafes. This ICT diffusion was occurring right before my eyes in 2005, under some of the harshest conditions imaginable. All the while, the political stability of Iraq was under constant strain from the many challenges associated with the post-conflict setting and a variegated state-building effort. Some of these challenges also relied on the diffusion of ICT capabilities, such as the use of cell phones to set-off improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and the use of the Internet to promote agendas unaligned with or against the state. I began to wonder about the relationship between the diffusion of ICT and political stability, and whether this relationship was positive, negative, or irrelevant.

In order to address this question, this thesis takes as its main premise that a rigorous plan to develop information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure is

crucial to the overall project of state building. That is, ICT is crucial to promoting development and political stability in the context of the growing significance of globalization. For the purpose of this thesis, political stability is defined as regime resilience against the possibility of unconstitutional or violent removal.[1] Development, meanwhile, is the institutional and economic processes attending the transition to a market economy.[2] ICT is a driving force in the case of 'developing states' in particular. Thus, when regulated properly, ICT can lead to prosperity and development and, when mismanaged, can facilitate instability and inequality.

Connectivity promotes globalization, facilitating both communication and information sharing in revolutionary ways. The potential of ICT is derived from the "ubiquitous wireless communication and computing capacity," it can provide, which in turn enable "social units (individuals and organizations) to interact anywhere, anytime."[3] ICT infrastructure connects governments with constituents and with other governments.[4] ICT infrastructure also generates consumers and connects them to global markets.[5] In this context, the state should continue to play a role in the facilitation of greater ICT infrastructure and the promotion of globalization. If this is the case then, nation-states with substantial ICT capacity should be more cooperative with each other, contribute more to global commerce, and arguably, more stable than those with limited ICT infrastructure.

This thesis will explore the contemporary relationship between ICT, the state and globalization. It will begin by discussing globalization and its relationship to political stability and ICT penetration, then move to a discussion of the role of ICT in state

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[1] Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, *Governance Matters VI: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators 1996-2000* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2007), 3.

[2] Michael Mousseau, "Market Civilization and Its Clash with Terror," *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (2002/03): 27.

[3] Manuel Castells, "Informationalism, Networks, and the Network Society: a Theoretical Blueprint," in Manuel Castells, ed., *The Network Society: A Cross-cultural Perspective* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar publishing Limited, 2004), 6.

[4] Sumit Roy, *Globalization, ICT, and Developing Nations* (California: Sage Publications Inc, 2005), 13.

[5] Ibid., 13.

building. Finally, the idea of a transnational-regional framework for state building will be explored. It will be argued that the current challenges to state building (or nation building) can be mitigated through the utilization of ICT capacity and capability, and that in many instances a regional focus is more appropriate than a focus on an individual nation-state as such. As already noted, the desire here is to determine if the relationship between the levels of ICT infrastructure used by a given 'state' and the stability of the given 'state' are positive, negative, or irrelevant. Once this has been established, a brief exploration of the interdependence among ICT, state building, and globalization will be addressed in order to illuminate the combined relevance of these three elements as a prescription for successful development.

The Asia Pacific will be relied upon heavily for historical precedents and examples due to the region's diverse governance structures and the fact that the region is also a dominant contributor of ICT products utilized by the global ICT industry and boasts some of the most penetrated ICT utilizing states in the world.[6] Another aspect of interest is the history of resistance to free access to information on the part of a number of governments in the region and the desire to exercise state control in order to prevent political dissenters from using ICT.[7] Additionally, our understanding of best practices concerning governance and ICT policy is furthered via an examination of the developing states in the Asia Pacific region, particularly the two case studies of Myanmar and Malaysia.[8] These two states were selected due to their shared characteristics of one-party dominance and the visible influence of ICT upon politics in Malaysia in comparison to the lack of significant political change resulting from the use of ICT in Myanmar.[9]

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[6] Nina Hachigian and Lily Wu, *The Information Revolution in Asia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), 6.

[7] Andrew L. Shapiro, *The Control Revolution* (New York, NY: Publicaffairs, 1999), 65.

[8] Paul Smith, *Terrorism and Violence in Southeast Asia* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2005), 3.

[9] Nina Hachigian and Lily Wu, *The Information Revolution in Asia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), xx.

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II.   GLOBALIZATION AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL STABILITY AND ICT

The contemporary world is profoundly shaped by the U.S.-led globalization project. The term U.S.-led is used here due to the prominence of U.S. national power in facilitating globalization.[10] The focus on globalization permeates popular and academic discourse on the subject of state building and ICT. As a result, globalization has become an all-encompassing term for a variety of trans-national economic and social activity and the pursuit of modernity itself. For example, the idea of technological globalization, which is particularly useful for the purposes of this study, focuses on the distribution between states of technological capabilities, collaboration to develop knowledge, and the creation of innovation.[11] The common theme inherent to all aspects of globalization is a shift from the national to the transnational.

This chapter will set out to define globalization in a manner that illuminates those attributes that influence political stability and ICT diffusion. Following this, the chapter will focus exclusively on the relationship between globalization and the nation-state since, for better or worse, this is where it all begins and ends. Next, in light of this relationship, the importance of locality will be established in order to reinforce the notion of policy relevance as crucial to success or failure. Finally, the chapter will show how globalization affects political stability and the role ICT plays in the process of state management of political stability.

Globalization is framed by two distinct enablers summed up nicely by Jagdish Bhagwati, in *In Defense of Globalization*, where he writes, "the story of globalization today must be written in two inks: one colored by technical change and the other by state action."[12] To put it another way, the nation-state (or the state) has played a key role in

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[10] Christopher J. Coyne, *After War: The Political Economy of Exporting Democracy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), 185. Also see Mark T. Berger, *The Battle for Asia: From Decolonization to Globalization*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004.

[11] Michael Kitson and Jonathan Michie, "The Political Economy of Globalization," in Daniele Archibugi, Jeremy Howells, and Jonathan Michie, eds., *Innovation Policy in a Global Economy* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 172.

[12] Jagdish Bhagwati, *In Defense of Globalization* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 11.

re-orienting its own operations away from the national towards the regional and the global. Transnational economic, political, and cultural processes have yet to completely transcend the nation-state framework, but they clearly foreshadow the importance of the regional and the global in their overall design and purpose.[13] This thesis defines globalization as the effort, implicit or explicit, to form global institutions and processes, which are still partly carried out at the national level, but to a large extent point towards some sort of global form of interaction.[14] More specifically, globalization exists as a facilitating factor for the "international community" aspect of the double compact highlighted in Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart's *Fixing Failed States*. This double compact, which, in their view now underpins the state's claim to sovereignty, consists of a compact between the state and its citizens, and a second compact between the state and the international community.[15] This interaction with the international community is a necessary requirement for prosperity. As the notion of a double compact makes clear, globalization has had a profound effect on the idea and practice of the modern nation-state over the past thirty years or so.

A.   GLOBALIZATION AND THE NATION-STATE

One major shortcoming or benefit, depending on your point of view, is the effect globalization has had on the framework of international governance established in the post-1945 era. This internationally recognized structural design for governance was legitimized through the United Nations and rested on the universalization of the sovereign nation-state as the key unit of the overall global order. Much of the debate about globalization is centered on the decreasing relevance of the nation-state. This perception is derived from the "reduction of the regulating capacity of the nation-state with regard to its classical functions in the field of economic and social policies, raising

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[13] Saskia Sassen, *A Sociology of Globalization* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2007), 3.

[14] Ibid., 5.

[15] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 8.

the issue of governability and political legitimacy."[16] The decreasing levels of national regulating capacity have occurred hand in hand with the increasing importance of the transnational corporations.[17] For example, a recent edition of *The Economist* noted the increasing importance of the way in which multinational corporations have established "long-term problem-solving relationships with governments in which the firms help to design an infrastructure programme as well as build some or all of it."[18] In the 21st century, states are relying less on state-to-state interaction to promote growth and more on the transnational private sector to achieve their ostensibly national aims.

This question of relevance is tied to the authority or influence of state governments in the development of enablers that facilitate connectivity. The emerging number of multi-national corporations and regional accommodations stifle state sovereignty and circumvent the influence of the nation-state. The tension between the processes of globalization and the nation-state is closely linked to these multinational corporations and their pursuit for optimal business arrangements based on freedom from the counterproductive policies of the nation-state.[19] In the light of this, the contemporary nation-state may not necessarily become completely irrelevant, but we are certainly witnessing the shifting of sovereignty upward to transnational authorities and downwards to the sub-national level.[20]

Bruce Porter has suggested that this shifting of power upward to the regional and global level has already taken place, but cautions that the shift is still subject to the power of the state as "the United Nations and the European Community can spearhead

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[16] Harald Barrios, Martin Beck, Andreas Boeckh, and Klaus Segbers (eds.), *Resistance to Globalization: Political Struggle and Cultural Resistance in the Middle East, Russia, and Latin America* (Rutgers University, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 2.

[17] Ibid., 2.

[18] The Economist, "The Empire Strikes Back," *A Special Report on Globalization*, Vol. 388, Number 8598, September 20– 26, 2008, 13.

[19] Jan Narveson, "The Obsolescence of the State: New Support for Old Doubts," in Yeager Hudson, ed., *Globalism and the Obsolescence of the State* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), 17-18.

[20] The sliding/slippage of sovereignty upwards and downwards is a theme highlighted by Mark T. Berger.

cooperative endeavors, but only if their constituent self-organized states freely subordinate themselves to their authority and implement those endeavors on the state level."[21]

Globalization has not replaced the nation-state, but it has profoundly modified the role of the nation-state within a networked global community.[22] As such, "transnational links may be increasing but governments are still able to assert control over the access to technology, should they decide it is in their interest."[23] The nation-state still has considerable power in many places, but it has also lost a lot of economic sovereignty in relation to globalization even if states can still control the use and distribution of ICT capacity. This work then, assumes the continued, yet decreasing, relevance of the nation-state in the context of contemporary globalization. The transformation of the nation-state is a result of the movement of sovereignty upwards away from the nation-state to supranational institutions and regional or global accommodations.[24] This slide of sovereignty upwards requires that the nation-state reorient itself towards managing global flows of capital and information rather than, as in the past, presiding over a national economy.[25]

B.   THE MERITS AND SHORTFALLS OF STANDARDIZATION

A major element in the power of globalization lies in its promotion of standardized processes and mechanisms to achieve higher levels of efficiency and greater

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[21] Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1994), 302.

[22] Manuel Castells, *Information Technology, Globalization, and Social Development,* UNRISD Discussion Paper No. 114 (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Sep 1999), 5, http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/F270E0C066F3DE7780256B67005B728C/$ file/dp114.pdf (accessed on September 16, 2008).

[23] Cherie Steele and Arthur Stein, "Communications Revolutions and International Relations," in Juliann Emmons Allison, ed., *Technology, Development, and Democracy: International Conflict in the Information Age* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 42.

[24] Manuel Castells, *Information Technology, Globalization, and Social Development,* UNRISD Discussion Paper No. 114 (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Sep 1999), 5, http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/F270E0C066F3DE7780256B67005B728C/$ file/dp114.pdf (accessed on September 16, 2008).

[25] Ibid., 5.

productivity across space and time. Thomas Friedman emphasizes the role of technology, more specifically ICT, in his work concerned with the "flattening of the world." Friedman speaks specifically, not only of the diffusion of standardized enablers such as the Internet and various transnational forms of infrastructure involved in the transmission of information, ideas and services, but of the resulting spread of standardized business practices associated with this "new global platform for collaboration."[26] The vision of a borderless world with standardized regulatory practices, such as universal rules for travel and the operation of the global economy in general are central to globalization. The resulting structural advantages from standardization are seen to be the imposition of an internationally recognized design upon the many fragmented practices of local governments.

The process of standardization though, has yet to demonstrate the ability to account for the complex demographics that shape the global landscape. The unique interests within the demography of the world must be addressed pursuant to the current challenges facing globalization. Contemporary globalization, more specifically, the processes of standardization are currently challenged by the "local, sub-national, national, and regional patterns of politics and development."[27] The perception exists that in this system, "wealth and power become increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, while the majorities, who are growing daily, are excluded not only from the benefits but also from the actual economic system itself."[28] This perception fails to distinguish between globalization in broad terms and state specific policies dictating the diffusion of globalization upon their societies. The importance of localized policy serves to facilitate or impede development within the current global system, and blame for the disparity should be directed at the policies and their state promoters versus globalization at large.

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[26] Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century, Updated and Expanded* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006), 91.

[27] Harald Barrios, Martin Beck, Andreas Boeckh, and Klaus Segbers (eds.), *Resistance to Globalization: Political Struggle and Cultural Resistance in the Middle East, Russia, and Latin America* (Rutgers University, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 4.

[28] Luiz Demetrio Valentini, "An Economy that Avoids Exclusion," in Robert Papini, Antonio Pavan, and Stefano Zamagni, eds., *Living in the Global Society* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 1997), 180-181.

Pankaj Ghemawat refers to this paradox of contemporary globalization as "semi-globalization," that is, the importance of balancing the differences between local cross-border strategy, international standardization and economies of scale.[29] The relevance of policy by local governance diminishes the standardizing character of globalization.

The strength of local policy though should be scrutinized carefully. State or local policy-makers cannot survive on their own under the auspice of globalization, let alone a globalized economy. Ranveig Gissinger and Nils Peter Gleditsch conclude in their article titled *Globalization and Conflict* that nation-states are increasingly powerless in the contemporary globalized world economy.[30] The continued ability of the nation-state to make choices in which components of globalization may be absorbed or rejected diminishes with each passing day as the process of globalization facilitates international connectivity for the pursuit of growth.

C. UNEVEN CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE EFFECT UPON POLITICAL STABILITY

Trends in globalization have an enormous impact upon the state governing bodies, regional accommodations, global organizations, and multi-national affiliations through the ability to generate growth and/or contribute to reinforcing poverty. "As the world converges, it simultaneously highlights the growing alienation and inequality between regions and cultures."[31] Globalization may pressure the state in a manner inconsistent with the pressures upon the global community at large. This is due to the level of perceived gain from local and global stakeholders compounded by the divergence of interests unique to state governance. At the state level, governments must respond to the needs of their constituents. As Susan Strange argues in *Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis*, "even the most authoritarian governments cannot in the long run

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29 Pankaj Ghemawat, *Redefining Global Strategy* (Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), 9-11.

30 Ranveig Gissinger and Nils Peter Gleditsch, "Globalization and Conflict: Welfare, Distribution, and Political Unrest," *Journal of World-Systems Research, Vol*. V, 2 (1999): 354, http://jwsr.ucr.edu/archive/vol5/number2/html/gissinger/gissinger/ (accessed January 18, 2008).

31 Sai Felicia Krishna-Hensel, "Challenges of a Transnational World: Imperatives for Cooperation," in Sai Felicia Krishna-Hensel, ed., *Global Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities in the Twenty-First Century* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 3.

remain indifferent to deep discontents or divisions of opinions in the societies they rule."[32] In this regard, globalization is viewed as either a success or failure, depending on the level of expectations and the existing and/or changes to the socio-economic status of the people concerned.

Much of the uneven impact of globalization on political stability can thus be attributed to the economic characteristics of globalization and the resultant challenge of diffusing wealth among the population of a state on terms that ameliorate rather than aggravate social and economic differences. Foreign trade and foreign direct investment are both aspects of globalization that have been demonstrated to facilitate both conflict and stability. "FDI boosts inequality and political instability, while trade creates favorable conditions for peace."[33] In addition, "trade liberalization creates 'winners' and 'losers', sometimes generating unemployment in selected industries and producing more inequality."[34] These characteristics of a globalized economy have reinforced the accumulation of wealth among elites and non-state entities, while driving down the income and quality of life of the poor in many societies. The perception of the state's inability to produce prosperity for the masses through increased productivity and cutting back on welfare programs has contributed to the discontent with globalization. Donald Snodgrass lends weight to the challenges facing political stability from the poor and their role in governance stating the "poor are not just a statistical abstraction, but a large, distinct, independently identifiable social group which has its own history and plays a particular role in the political and economic life of a nation."[35]

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[32] Susan Strange, "Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis," in Paul F. Diehl, ed., *The Politics of Global Governance: International Organizations in an Interdependent World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1997), 52.

[33] Ranveig Gissinger and Nils Peter Gleditsch, "Globalization and Conflict: Welfare, Distribution, and Political Unrest," *Journal of World-Systems Research,* Vol. V, 2 (1999): 329, http://jwsr.ucr.edu/archive/vol5/number2/html/gissinger/gissinger/ (accessed January 18, 2008).

[34] G. Shabbir Cheema, "Inclusive Governance and Democracy in Asia: Transitions and Challenges," in Dennis A. Rondinelli and John M. Heffron, eds., *Globalization and Change in Asia* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Piblishers Inc., 2007), 153.

[35] Donald R. Sondgrass, *Inequality and Economic Development in Malaysia* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1980), 4.

The perception of socio-economic inequality or injustice brought about by the inability to diffuse wealth generates social discontent, which may gain traction in the form of political opposition. The members of this political opposition will demand inclusion, reform, and if still unsatisfied a change in governance. Amy Chua expands on this notion of localized discontent and its importance in the contemporary context in *World on Fire*. She emphasizes the ability of the socially deprived to mobilize along socio-economic lines compounded by ethnicity to transcend national boundaries facilitated by globalization and further aggravated by the level of perceived injustice or exclusion.[36] As this social discontent works to destabilize the political structure internally then, it also has the ability to apply external pressures upon the government by projecting instability outwards in a manner inconsistent with regional stability.

D.   THE ROLE OF ICT IN MANAGING POLITICAL STABILITY

Political stability is widely recognized to be a continuous process of governance with varying levels of stability or instability dependent on a multitude of internal factors and external pressures. A significant effort was undertaken to determine the key indicators in modeling political stability by an organization of scholars aptly named *The Political Instability Task Force* (PITF).[37] The PITF was "originally formed in 1994 at the request of senior policymakers in the U.S. government…to assess and explain the vulnerability of states around the world to political instability and state failure."[38] The conclusive model produced by the PITF for determining conditions for political instability was derived from reliance upon the following four indicators: regime type, infant mortality, regional stability, and the level of state-led discrimination.[39] A review then, of pertinent literature suggests globalization broadly, and ICT specifically serves as a facilitating factor for each of the preceding indicator categories. This relationship

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[36] Amy Chua, *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability* (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 2003), 72.

[37] Formerly known as the State Failure Task Force (SFTF).

[38] Political Instability Task Force, http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/index.htm (accessed on November 4, 2008).

[39] Jack A. Goldstone, et al, *A Global Forecasting Model of Political Instability* (Washington DC: American Political Science Association, 2005), http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/pitfp5.htm (accessed on September 18, 2008).

serves to reinforce the perception of ICT as crucial to the process of political stability for the governing entities of the contemporary world.

ICT is just one enabler that may serve to further stabilize governance or compound a government's susceptibility to political instability. "The impact of ICT in a country or a region depends on its nature, the purpose of its deployment and its spatial spread, besides the economic, administrative and social environment backing up the strategy of its diffusion."[40] The outcome then becomes determined by the adopted ICT policies of the government in each particular case and subsequent balancing of ICT policy versus constituent desire for access. The PITF suggests that a full autocracy regime tends to be the most stable, and ICT may be utilized to further the monopoly of the regime on governance such as discussed later in the case of Myanmar.[41] ICT stimulates development by allowing countries to skip stages of economic growth through technological advanced modernity, while the negative effect on economies unable to adjust to these new technologies is expressed cumulatively.[42]

The relationship between ICT and political stability is derived from the processes inherent in the technologies facilitating the connectivity between a government and its constituents. "Politics and governance rely on the communication of messages and ideas, and technology can bolster political power by influencing the speed, destination, and anonymity of those communications."[43] In addition to these processes of connectivity, ICT facilitates state processes of governance unique to each regime, underlying the

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[40] Amitabh Kundu, *ICT and Human Development: Towards Building a Composite Index for Asia* (New Delhi, India: Elsevier, 2004), 1.

[41] Full autocracy is a regime that combines an absence of effective contestation with repressed or suppressed participation. A full democracy is also considered to be just as stable with partial autocracies and partial democracies substantially more vulnerable to crisis than their more "coherent" counterparts. Jack A. Goldstone, et al, *A Global Forecasting Model of Political Instability* (Washington DC: American Political Science Association, 2005), http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/pitf/pitfp5.htm (accessed on September 18, 2008).

[42] Manuel Castells, *Information Technology, Globalization, and Social Development,* UNRISD Discussion Paper No. 114 (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Sep 1999), 3, http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/F270E0C066F3DE7780256B67005B728C/$file/dp114.pdf (accessed on September 16, 2008).

[43] Nina Hachigian and Lily Wu, *The Information Revolution in Asia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), 56.

importance of ICT policy management. "Technologies *are* political, then, in the sense that they have proclivities that can easily be tapped by certain policies and practices."[44] The embedded character of ICT in the processes of governance, compounded by the capacity for ICT access by citizens, can serve to strengthen the compact between the government and the governed. This level of proportionality, between access to information and how the state manages it, has profound implications on political stability. Short-term experiences in crisis, whether they are economic, man-made, or natural, can take on significant dimensions in the face of weak governance and high levels of constituent access. On the other hand, the same conditions may lend credence to a sense of political inclusion by the population and strengthen governance dependent on the state management of ICT policy.

In order to demonstrate the geospatial relationship between ICT and political stability a simple visual aid follows. This chart will show a positive relationship between ICT penetration and political stability. Internet penetration is used to represent ICT penetration because it represents "the extent to which a country's population are proactively accessing, exchanging, and providing information on a global basis."[45] The rate of ICT growth and the related pace of local, regional and global connectivity also serves as an indicator based on societal shifts from exclusivity to information access and presents the depth of challenge for governance to properly manage ICT diffusion. "Some degree of flux in the underlying politics of a state must be present before ICT can have an effect on changing politics."[46] Finally, political stability is represented by the corresponding levels of state stability as indicated by the Failed States Index.

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[44] Andrew L. Shapiro, *The Control Revolution* (New York, NY: Publicaffairs, 1999), 14.

[45] Nina Hachigian and Lily Wu, *The Information Revolution in Asia* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003), 2.

[46] Ibid., 71.

Figure 1.　　　　　　State stability for Asia Pacific Region

State Stability for 2008 in Asia Pacific Region

Legend
Asia Pacific
2007 FSI Rank
28.50 - 39.70
39.71 - 70.80
70.81 - 77.80
77.81 - 81.20
81.21 - 84.40
84.41 - 87.20
87.21 - 93.10
93.11 - 97.00
97.01 - 99.00

1:55,000,000

Miles
0   455   910   1,820   2,730   3,640

All information derived from Open Sources:
Internet user stats--www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm,
submarine cable layout--news.soft32.com/wp-content/upload/NEC/APNC2.jpg,
regional alliances--OCHA Regional Office for Asia Pacific,
Stability derived from Failed State Index by Fund for Peace,
All other vector data--ESRI

Figure 1 represents the corresponding levels of political stability derived from the Fund for Peace Failed State Index (FSI).[47]　The FSI measures a series of social/political/economic indicators in order to determine the level of state stability. The FSI is useful as a starting point to determine correlation between state stability and both Internet penetration and Internet growth in the Asia Pacific Region. The darker the shade of color in Figure 1 corresponds to decreasing rank of state stability in relation to other states in the Asia Pacific region.

Data for the Internet is used in this particular case, but the same method could be used for cellular phones, landline phones and televisions. The Internet data serves utility

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[47] The Fund for Peace, Failed States Index Scores 2008,
http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=292&Itemid=452
(accessed on November 13, 2008).

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due to the linkages between Internet access and infrastructure to connectivity in the local, regional, and global sense for more than just communication, but access to and the sharing of knowledge. Internet penetration is a continuing process usually measured as an increase over time, whereas state stability is a process subject to more frequent change, positive or negative, depending upon many variables.

Figure 2.   State stability and Internet penetration[48]
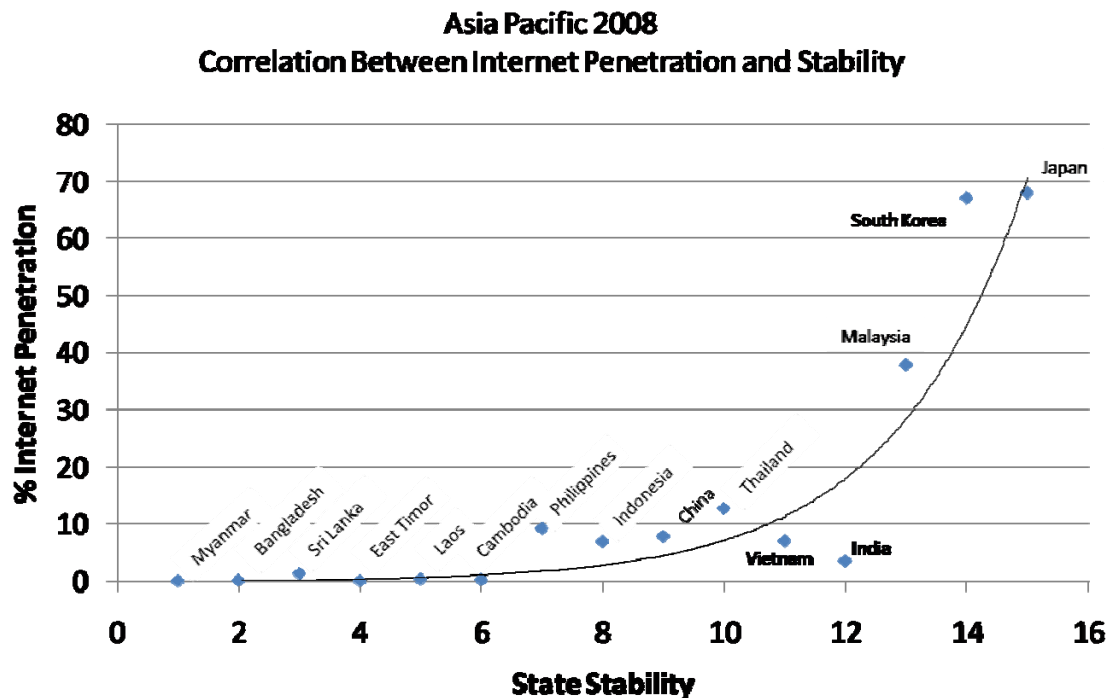
Figure 2 portrays a positive correlation between state stability and Internet penetration for the year 2008. The higher degree of internet penetration corresponds with a higher level of stability based upon the applied data sets. This correlation appears to have no relationship to the type of political system in any particular state, but is much more closely aligned with the type of development policies practiced by each regime type

as illustrated by the case studies of Myanmar and Malaysia. If unique policy management is vital to the political stability of a state, then it becomes necessary to produce a snapshot of correlated data in order to begin the process of drilling down into specific states for greater understanding of the relationship between the two. Also, while Internet penetration is utilized to portray a relationship with state stability, the rate of growth in Internet penetration is useful in determining what impact if any the pace of diffusion has upon each state.

E.   CONCLUSION

Globalization has become the principle focus for numerous studies in economics, political science, and the social sciences generally. This chapter explored some of the major ideas associated with globalization and its relationship to the nation-state in order to define and frame the contemporary relationship between ICT diffusion and state building. It is not globalization alone that contributes to uneven development, as many critics of globalization tend to argue. A major cause of the uneven distribution of the benefits of globalization lies in the form of governance, more specifically the acceptance or rejection of a policy centered on the premise "that trade enhances growth, and that growth reduces poverty."[49] The correlation between ICT and political stability, both conceptually and empirically, has been demonstrated to be positive — or at least can be positive under most circumstances depending on the state concerned. Acknowledging ICT is not the sole contributor to political instability, nor is it an independent actor free of state management, provides us with a basis for further exploration. The following chapters will look at state building in theory and practice and then turn to specific case studies in an attempt to capture the dynamics involved between ICT and political stability. The overall goal is to determine what sort of policy design for ICT is most effective for state building.

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[49] Jagdish Bhagwati, *In Defense of Globalization* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 53.

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III. CONTEMPORARY STATE BUILDING AND THE NEED TO MOVE BEYOND CRISIS RESPONSE

The contemporary global order is awash with various projects concerned with the practice of state building. The burgeoning literature on state building routinely emphasizes the feasibility of various efforts if the right guidelines are followed. However, it is, as many authors and policy-makers acknowledge, much more challenging in practice. The challenge is derived from the extensive international processes required for state building and the amount of resources required generating self-sustaining governance. Add to this the lack of institutional memory, an absence of meaningful long-term commitment on the part the international community, not to mention important local issues to do with history, demography and geography and it becomes clear that any single state-building project is actually a tremendous endeavor in terms of time and commitment by all concerned. In practice the investment and momentum for any state-building project ebbs and flows. The problem posed to state building is significant based on these challenges and yet, as history has demonstrated, not entirely insurmountable. Each state-building project is unique in both the initial conditions met at the start and the subsequent design imposed for continuity.

This chapter begins by discussing the necessity of state building in order to augment the globalization project and the expansion of governance, security, and market participation. Robert Kagan's observations in *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*, offers an account of contemporary geo-political conditions, which is acutely concerned with the growing demand for modernization and globalization nations and their citizens around the world.[50] It is this geo-political and global economic context within which state building is explored. Contemporary state building is presented as a process that is inherently "corrupt" due to the continued practice of generating state-building policy as a response to a crisis. State building as crisis response ensures that a particular project is hastily implemented under the auspices of a short time horizon and

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[50] Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 2008), 81.

the desire to immediately demonstrate improvement and/or development. Finally, the security implications which arise from crisis response methodologies will be explored to outline the risks associated with hastily implemented exclusionary policies.

For the purposes of this chapter, the state will be given a functional as well as a conceptual definition derived from the contemporary literature. The state is defined functionally as "the legislature, the police, the judiciary, and the various branches of civil and military administration."[51] Additionally, the state is defined conceptually as an instrument of the convergence of common purpose with public law.[52] The crucial importance of state building assumes the necessity of the state. The discussion that follows will also draw upon the security aspects of realism, the social implications of an unregulated and open economy derived from liberalism, and a focus on the relationship between the state and class used by proponents of a structural analysis of the 'state'.[53]

A. THE NECESSITY FOR STATE BUILDING

Contemporary state building is necessary in order to augment, or in some cases introduce, the internationally accepted structural design for local, regional, and global governance. There is an underlying reliance upon many to separate the functions of state building and nation building along the following lines,

> *State building* involves the creation of concrete, identifiable administrative and political institutions. *Nation building* is the process by which a population develops a sense of community or connection that becomes the basis of individual and group political identity, which in turn influences individual and group political behavior.[54]

State building cannot occur within the context of such a divide, but must demonstrate the convergence of these two preceding ideals into one policy design in order to generate a self-sustaining state.

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[51] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 117.

[52] Ibid., 121.

[53] Sumit Roy, *Globalization, ICT, and Developing Nations: Challenges in the Information Age* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 2005), 28-29.

[54] Mary P. Callahan, *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 13.

The contemporary state is a relatively new phenomenon having emerged in Europe between the 1450s and the 1650s.[55] As a planned process that involved external intervention; however, we need look back no further than the twentieth century, to cases such as the British experience in Iraq during the 1920s-1930s. The result of this pre-United Nation state-building project is best described by Toby Dodge who writes: "by the time of its independence in 1932, Iraq could neither defend itself against neighboring states, nor impose order unassisted across its territory, and it depended on the RAF as the final guarantor of its survival."[56] The relevant history concerning state building is covered by the numerous and well documented cases of post-war reconstruction and decolonization during the latter half of the twentieth century.[57]

The beginning of contemporary state building coincides with the creation of the United Nations (UN). The UN was created in 1945 with only 50 existing states meeting the terms of membership in order to sign the charter. The rest of the world in 1945 consisted of conquered enemies, neutral countries, countries immersed in civil war, and an array of European colonial possessions.[58] It is from this complex global order that the system of sovereign nation-states would be universalized and state building as a formal project would emerge. Unlike earlier decades, however, the design of state-building projects must now accommodate the requirements of globalization. Even the most isolated state must have the ability to plug into regional or global markets, and allow for advances in technology for both transportation and ICT in order to take advantage of assisted development. Challenges appear in the form of creating institutions which 'fit' international design for commerce and diplomacy while addressing the fragility of local

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[55] Bruce D. Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1994), 6.

[56] Toby Dodge, "Iraq: the Contradictions of Exogenous State-building in Historical Perspective," *Third World Quarterly*, 27:1 (Routledge, 2006), 194-5.

[57] James Dobbins, et al, *America's Role in Nation building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003). Francis Fukuyama, *State-building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004). Francis Fukuyama, ed., *Nation building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2006).

[58] Paul Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (New York, NY: Random House, 2006), 78.

conditions. State building then, is arguably more challenging today due to the corresponding occurrence of the U.S. led globalization project.

The sustained existence of international organizations such as the United Nations and regional accommodations such as the European Union (EU) are inherently designed to promote the nation-state project, even under the auspice of increasing irrelevance due to the encroaching standardization of globalization and modernity. This organizational design generates the advancement of geopolitical concerns, global political economy, and the universal pursuit of humanitarian projects. The ability to plug into this global community and actively participate requires a standardized system of organizations readily available to not only receive the benefits of membership, but also demonstrate the capacity to contribute to other members. The state then is designed to contribute to mainly two processes of global arrangement. First, the state must demonstrate efficiency to an international framework meant to facilitate common interests. Second, the state must acquiesce to the establishment and enforcement of international law. These two pillars of global design maintain their defining qualities in global forums such as the United Nations on down to the level of individual state governance.

B. STATE BUILDING TO GENERATE INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC FIT

State building is vital in the pursuit of expanding the global political economy and reinforcing the relevance of regional and global accommodations in order to generate an international fit both socially and economically, while also building the ever heeded demand for capacity. A state must demonstrate the capacity for governance consisting of "authority, concerted action, and the resultant institutions."[59] Contemporary state building is pursued by external powers with a foothold alliance among the indigenous population each complementing the other in the generation of legitimacy and self sustainability of the state.[60] During the course of such an endeavor, state building may

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[59] J.P. Singh, "Information Technologies and the Changing Scope of Global Power and Governance," in James N. Rosenau and J.P. Singh, eds., *Information Technologies and Global Politics: The Changing Scope of Power and Governance* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 18.

[60] Toby Dodge, "Iraq: the Contradictions of Exogenous State-building in Historical Perspective," *Third World Quarterly*, 27:1, 190.

manifest itself as "formal military occupation, counter-insurgency, peacekeeping, national reconstruction, foreign aid and the use of stabilization forces."[61] These state-building characteristics appear threaded throughout the necessary institutions required to contribute to the processes of meeting expectations both internal to the state, as well as the expectations of external stakeholders in the international community. This is reflected best by Ghani and Lockhart in their description of the double compact at the core of their citizen-based approach strategy for state building.[62] The double compact underlying the state's claim to sovereignty consists of a compact between the state and its citizens, and a second compact between a state and the international community.[63] This ideal of a compact between the state and international community suggests regionalism at a minimum, and hinges on the successful management of those institutional relationships required for self-sustaining development and the political maturity of new governance.

The state-building project requirement for fit with the international community suggests a strong correlation for liberalizing both economically and politically in order to compete in a global economy.[64] The state must perform to meet these expectations or succumb to intra-state regime change as a result of social accountability and/or exclusion from both regional and global accommodations. This track of development results in policy pressure to incorporate capitalism, unstrung from political concessions, with the quiet hope that cultural liberalization or exerting soft power may produce beneficial change for all.[65] This approach allows for the state, regardless of political structure, to participate in a global economy and open domestic markets to regional and global trade relationships.

The design for the creation of institutional capacity varies, but the focus on best practices to create or further develop these institutional capabilities remains the same.

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[61] Mark T. Berger, "From Nation-Building to State-Building: the Geopolitics of Development, the Nation-State System and the Changing Global Order," in Mark T. Berger, ed., *From Nation-Building to State-Building* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 2.

[62] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States*, 7.

[63] Ibid., 8.

[64] Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*, 5.

[65] Ibid., 82.

The same determination has been made repeatedly for judicial, educational, and economic, as the characteristics of governance and their relationship to the internal populace has changed little since the end of World War II. A singular focus to rapidly generate institutional capacity lacks the ability to unite the populace or promote the identity of the political structure. This results in prolonged debate by all stakeholders over the matters of access, placement, and cost of institutional capacity-generating projects. The competitiveness introduced by external stakeholders, due to the monopoly of monies they possess, does more harm than good for the state-building project. One such example from the Afghanistan experience is the road from Kabul to Khandahar, which was completed on time, but at the cost of one million dollars (USD) a mile borne by the United States by the time the project was completed in 2003.[66] In the end, this road became far more of a symbol for the challenges facing state building than a successful example of comprehensive long-term and planned capacity building.

C.   THE DYNAMICS OF STATE BUILDING AS A RESPONSE TO CRISIS

Arguably, the most significant challenge confronting state building is the harsh reality that almost all state-building projects are initiated only as a result of some form of crisis requiring intervention. The fact, or the appearance, that the United States acts substantively only in response to a crisis as a prelude to state building results in a parallel conceptual crisis response approach on the part of practitioners and policy-makers associated with state building. Crisis, as it is defined here, relies upon Carnes Lord Interpretation as "a defining moment – a point in a developing series of events where significant change becomes possible,"[67] yet constrained by, "an awareness of finite time," and compounded by the, "heightened probability of involvement in military hostilities."[68] The appearance of crisis generates surprise and is usually met with rapid,

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[66] Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2008), 186.

[67] Carnes Lord, "Crisis Management: A Primer," *IASPS Research Papers in Strategy*, No. 7 (Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, 1998), 6, http://www.israeleconomy.org/strategic7/Institute%20for%20Advanced%20Strategic.htm (accessed July 22, 2008).

[68] Ibid., 4.

but not thoroughly vetted practices in order to promote the perception of global involvement for grandiose causes and lobbied participation towards social advancement. This is exacerbated by the, "failure to assess systemically the processes, styles and psychology of crisis decision making," by governments other than one's own.[69]

This phenomenon of state building as crisis response appears in many such contemporary examples such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, and Somalia.[70] This has resulted in the transformation of many state militaries to drift from war-fighting towards state building due to the necessity to "take on a range of functions—law enforcement, economic regulation, tax collection, census taking, magazine publishing, political party registration, food aid distribution, and so on—that have little to do with traditional defense responsibilities."[71] As Mary Callahan suggests in describing the Burmese military state-building project, balancing these developing military capabilities and civilian participation is the key to governance at both a local and regional level.[72] Another shared theme is the lack of institutional memory or the inability to apply a model for state building, even as the world witnesses the same few great powers partake in the vast majority of state-building projects. This is disheartening given the fact the United States has participated in numerous state-building projects, all of which are well documented and heavily critiqued; compounded by the fact that state building as a formal practice is only about fifty to sixty years old.[73]

The history of state building as crisis response demonstrates the multitude of security implications during the process to build capacity for governance. The security question must be addressed as an internal requirement to maintain an environment of

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[69] Lord, "Crisis Management: A Primer," 7.

[70] Of particular note, I do not differentiate between state-building and reconstruction, as reconstruction involves all the characteristics of state-building, with the further sometimes derogatory implication that something worth reconstructing once existed.

[71] Mary P. Callahan, *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 205.

[72] Ibid., 204-206.

[73] James Dobbins, et al, *America's Role in Nation building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003). Francis Fukuyama, ed., *Nation building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2006).

relative safety in order to meet the expectations of the populace. Security must also be addressed as the ability to project power at a minimum to ensure survival of the state from external aggression. As Philip Bobbitt states in his vast discourse on the history and complexities of the state in, *The Shield of Achilles*, "a State that could neither protect its citizens from crime nor protect its homeland from attack by other states would have ceased to fulfill its most basic reason for being."[74] The development of security is a major point of friction in the design of the state-building project unique to each particular circumstance.

The introduction of foreign military power is hardly an ever-welcomed package in any state-building project and is met with stringent critique and suspicion from the internal population as well as members of the coalition and those states not included in the force package. The examples of this are many such as Russia, China, Iran, and Pakistan's suspicions about U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. The situation is exacerbated by a lack of mission clarity, such as counterinsurgency, man hunting, or state building due to crisis generated responses and an absence of overt policy design. The length of time the forces will be present and what their contributions are to the project are debated from the time force is introduced until well after the last foreign service member leaves the state, if the foreign military presence ever completely leaves. This is exacerbated if the intentions of the external powers are not made clear, the mission is ill defined, and/or a level of perceived stability to facilitate the rest of the project is not met. Unilateral action obviously draws more scrutiny than does a multilateral commitment from the international community under the guise of the United Nations.

D.   CONCLUSION

Recent history in regards to state building is in sharp contrast to many calls for sustainable solutions for state building such as "a systemic effort on the part of the United States as well as its multilateral partners to develop interagency doctrine and associated command and control arrangements that would permit their routine use in post Cold War

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[74] Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York, NY: Random House Inc., 2002), 216.

crises."[75] In the absence of guiding principles, but under the strain of real world efforts two general trends have emerged in the literature focused on the design of state building. This is either a top down approach imposed by external powers or a bottom up approach facilitated by external powers. Toby Dodge states that the contemporary dynamics of externally driven state building assumes a 'top down' design.[76] The realistic needs of the external stakeholders involved, and the necessity for 'fit' in regional and global accommodations support state building imposed from the top down.

This top down approach is in sharp contrast to the bottom up state-building agenda promoted by Ghani and Lockhart. They promote a framework "for a citizen-based approach to state building: a new legal compact between citizen, state and the market, not a top-down imposition of the state."[77] The critique of such a citizen based approach is the lack of initial capacity, security, and capital. If the state could be built from the bottom up, then we would be saturated by examples of citizen based models for development throughout the underdeveloped regions of the world. State building must come from the top down, even through coercive measures if necessary, in order to properly develop capacity for domestic and international benefit. A top-down approach also allows for the government to establish legitimacy through expansive processes of development. This approach of course is reliant on the ability of security and growth to generate consensus and political legitimacy.

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[75] Lord, "Crisis Management: A Primer," 18.

[76] Toby Dodge, "Iraq: the Contradictions of Exogenous State-building in Historical Perspective," *Third World Quarterly*, 27:1, 2006, 190.

[77] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States*, 7.

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IV.   MYANMAR

There is a growing debate about the relationship between the implementation and management of ICT by various governments on the one hand and economic development outcomes and/or the degree of political stability on the other hand. This chapter will focus on Myanmar. It will demonstrate that an authoritarian government with a strong incentive to implement restrictive policies in relation to ICT can mitigate the liberalizing effects generally associated with ICT penetration and growth. ICT penetration in Myanmar in its current highly regulated form serves to reinforce the status quo and only marginally enhances the opportunity for liberal reform and improved development. However, it will also be argued that the use of repressive practices by the state of Myanmar may in time be challenged through a combination of internal dissent and external pressures calling for transparency that, at least in part, utilizes ICT to further a more liberal agenda. To put it another way, the military government of Myanmar is an authoritarian dictatorship that clearly seeks to retain power and, at best, pays lip service to democracy and political openness. In this context, does the policy framework used by the military regime to govern the role of ICT contribute to the goals of political stability and/or development? Myanmar then, is an important case study because it demonstrates a number of key issues. First, it draws attention to the importance of ICT policy versus ICT infrastructure. Second, it highlights the continued relevance of the approach taken by the government to control ICT. More specifically, it makes clear the ability of the state to create and manage investment plans that lack plurality or competition, and the inability of ICT growth alone to incrementally promote transparency and efficiency. More generally, the case of Myanmar raises questions about whether there is a straightforward connection between the pursuit of ICT and the increased connectivity of the population and the governing body along intra-state, regional, or global lines of communication, information sharing, and commerce.

A.   ICT POLICY – MAINTAINING A STATE OF INSTABILITY

The present government of Myanmar came to power in 1988 after the Burmese military took control of the country and established rule as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), eventually renaming itself the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in 1997.[78] The SPDC controls the only ICT Company in Myanmar, called the Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MTC), which falls under the Ministry of Communications, Posts, and Telegraphs and is chaired by a minister who currently is Brigadier General Thein Zaw.[79] Myanmar's Internet penetration rate was 0.1 percent with an Internet user growth rate of 3,900 percent as of March 2008.[80] Additionally, Myanmar has experienced a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.3% in main telephone lines and a CAGR of 56.7% in mobile cellular subscribers from 2001 through 2006.[81] This rapid growth has occurred under highly volatile political and economic conditions. The low penetration rate and low level of stability in Myanmar illustrates the positive correlation between the rate of ICT penetration and level of stability.

At the same time, Myanmar may well be considered a state in transition due to the drafting of a new constitution, and small incremental steps undertaken to conform to international pressure for change,[82] although an argument will be made suggesting quite the opposite. Figure 4 demonstrates the improvement in political stability witnessed during the corresponding growth in ICT showing Myanmar ranked in the 13th percentile in 1996 subsequently improving to the 24th percentile of politically stable countries by 2006.[83]

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[78] Larry A. Niksch, *Burma-U.S. Relations* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2007), 3.

[79] Ministry of Communications, Posts, and Telegraphs, www.mcpt.gov.mm (accessed April 27, 2008).

[80] Internet World Stats, Asia Internet Usage and Population (Miniwatts marketing Group, 2008), http://www.Internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm#asia (accessed April 15, 2008).

[81] International Telecommunication Union, ICT Statistics (Place des Nations, Switzerland: ICTU, 2008), http://www.itu.int/ICTU-D/ICTEYE/Reports.aspx# (accessed April 15, 2008).

[82] "Spring Postponed," *The Economist*, April 12, 2008, 27-29.

[83] Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, *Governance Matters VI: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators 1996-2006,* http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi2007/sc_chart.asp# (accessed May 18, 2008).

Figure 3.   Myanmar Political Stability 1996-2006[84]
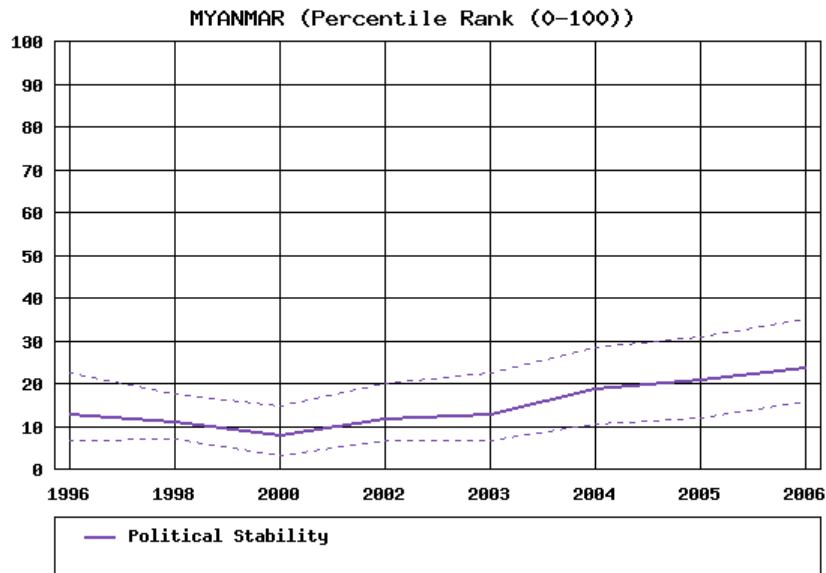
On the surface, this assessment appears highly optimistic, but upon further inquiry the reality is that Burma/Myanmar emerged as an independent nation-state in 1948, experiencing significant internal challenges to governance, and has been identified at various times over the decades as a modernizing society in transition.[85] The challenge of development in Myanmar demonstrates the difficulty in embracing those ideals rooted in aspects of modernization theory suggesting that, "correct nation-building strategies would ensure traditional loyalties, such as ethnic allegiance would fade and new loyalties to the modern nation would become the central element of every citizen's identity."[86] The current relationship between the SPDC and their constituents prove otherwise. Mary Callahan presents a compelling account of this relationship and the subsequent impact on state building in her book *Making Enemies*, which suggests that the dynamic between the SPDC and their constituents is a result of the historical processes involved in Myanmar. More specifically, the coercion-intensive environment of contemporary Myanmar is

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[84] Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi, *Governance Matters VI.*

[85] Mark T. Berger, "Decolonization, Modernization and Nation-Building: Political Development Theory and the Appeal of Communism in Southeast Asia, 1945-1975," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* 34:3 (United Kingdom: The National University of Singapore, 2003), 434-435.

[86] Ibid., 435.

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attributable to the post-conflict environment where "warfare created state institutions that in many situations cannot distinguish between citizens and enemies of the state."[87]

Presently, the SPDC maintains absolute control over every aspect of governance to include those sectors of social, corporate, and government ICT. The desire of the SPDC to retain this absolute authority puts them in a solid position given the almost non-existence ICT infrastructure prior to their arrival to power. That is, the SPDC has been able to shape ICT capability to suit their needs in order to meet their ends through the implementation of such laws as the Electronic Transactions Law in 2004 providing a legal framework for electronic data transmission and storage. This law allows connectivity and communication, while at the same time creating government enforceable standards through subjecting the user to criminal action for electronic conduct both within the borders of Myanmar and internationally as well.[88]

B.   IN PURSUIT OF POLITICAL STABILITY

The state then, maintains a high level of relevance in managing the political impact of ICT through the adoption of liberalizing, moderate, or restrictive ICT policies.[89] The ICT penetration in Myanmar in the current highly regulated form serves to reinforce the status quo and only marginally enhances the opportunity for reform and improved development. The SPDC acts to mitigate those measures identified for successful liberalizing development through substantially blocking any opportunity for ICT to influence the political situation or induce social change in a manner consistent with the desires of the population.[90] This restrictive management of ICT is conducted through controlling and monitoring access, content, and freedom of choice over information that conflicts with the ideology of the SPDC and might result in the

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87 Mary P. Callahan, *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 3.

88 Khin Aye Win, "Myanmar," *Digital Review of Asia Pacific (*Orbicom, IDRC, UNDP-APDIP, Penang: Southbound, 2005), 149. http://www.digital-review.org/2005-6PDFs/2005%20C16%20mm%20Myanmar%20147-149.pdf (accessed April 25, 2008).

89 Sumit Roy, *Globalization, ICT, and Developing Nations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc., 2005), 110-111.

90 Ibid., 111.

dissolution of the SPDC's monopoly on power.[91] This strategy is bounded by what the SPDC can control, as international activist collectives utilizing the Internet have demonstrated the capability to influence state development such as convincing one major Western company to pull out of Burma.[92] Given more time, this restrictive policy in the face of regional ICT penetration should support a positive relationship between stability and level of ICT penetration so long as the SPDC takes steps to liberalize the current policies governing ICT.

The SPDC justifies the restrictive policies for ICT management as necessary to maintain control of the state. The SPDC, derived from the military, maintains existing control through coercion and corruption by maintaining a monopoly of physical power and information control.[93] Myanmar has a complicated history of insurgency and drug trafficking. Jeff Goodwin describes the condition in Myanmar as an example of "persistent insurgency," stating that, "several ethnic separatist groups have been at war with the Burmese state almost continuously since the country attained independence from Britain in 1948."[94] Much literature is available on the negative impact upon stability armed insurgencies can have on weak central governments.[95] This situation is further exacerbated by the existence of mature criminal organizations in Myanmar, which are reportedly so large that an accurate assessment of the extent of their impact upon trade and the country's economy is unavailable.[96] Accepting and maintaining this status quo places the SPDC in a favorable condition to produce ICT policy that favors and promotes a state monopoly of power. The SPDC are able to take advantage of changes in telecommunications and manage transparency to further blend legal and illegal money,

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[91] Roy, *Globalization, ICT, and Developing Nations*, 111.

[92] Andrew L. Shapiro, *The Control Revolution* (New York, NY: Publicaffairs, 1999), 50.

[93] Nina Hachigian, "The Internet and Power in One-Party East Asian States," *The Washington Quarterly* 25:3 (Washington DC: The Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 42.

[94] Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out, States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 220.

[95] Mark T. Berger and Douglas A. Borer, "The Long War: insurgency, counterinsurgency, and collapsing states," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 197-215.

[96] Liana Sun Wyler, *Burma and Transnational Crime* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), 1.

thereby complicating the task of international monitoring, and maintain the balance of forces in favor of state allowed crime and corruption.[97]

SPDC monopoly of power extends to the population in many forms through the utilization of the growing ICT infrastructure. Media outlets are state owned and vetted by the government in order to produce a propaganda style of news.[98] Internet is censored to allow access only to state approved mediums thereby controlling access to information and subjecting the user to monitoring for use inconsistent with the ideals of the state. For example, websites such as Google, Yahoo, and Hotmail are banned from use by the SPDC with no reason provided.[99] The enforcement of such regulations is very real indeed as one "supporter of the Burmese pro-democracy movement reportedly died in prison, where he was being held for the crime of using a fax machine without a license."[100] Additionally, the SPDC maintains a formidable monopoly of access to communication outside of the state through the promotion of their controlled Internet which allows the government "new access to the global debate to counter accusations against it more effectively."[101]

The SPDC though, even with their current monopoly on power and information has demonstrated a willingness to liberalize ICT policies mainly in order to diffuse international sentiment thereby opening the door for reform. This is demonstrated through recent episodes that highlight the inability of the state to maintain absolute control over segments of the population which feel discontent towards the SPDC. The SPDC has eased earlier policy restrictions on ICT such as the Computer Science Development Law of 1996, which imposed an automatic jail term of 7 to 15 years for computer use or possession without government permission.[102] The access to ICT by

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[97] Alan Dupont, *Terrorism and Violence in Southeast Asia*, ed. Paul Smith, 9.

[98] "Spring Postponed," *The Economist*, April 12, 2008, 28.

[99] The Times of India, "Myanmar Bans Google," *TimesofIndia.com*, 30 June 2006, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1692971.cms (accessed April 29, 2008).

[100] Andrew L. Shapiro, *The Control Revolution* (New York, NY: Publicaffairs, 1999), 66.

[101] Nina Hachigian, *The Internet and Power in One-Party East Asian States*, 47.

[102] Lisa B. Brooten, *Global Communications, local conceptions: Human Rights and the politics of Communication among the Burmese Opposition-in-Exile* (Ohio: Ohio University, 2003), 100.

many members of opposition groups has facilitated their ability to capture events inside Myanmar, and project them to the rest of the world generating sympathy and funding.[103] Much of this work occurs in neighboring states such as Thailand, where expatriated opposition leaders are then able to develop connectivity on a global level, generating resources and foreign policies sympathetic to their cause.[104] "The virtual community of Burmese dissidents revolves around a few web sites, such as BurmaNet, that carry the most up-to-date information about the struggle, as well as background materials for newcomers and journalists."[105] Over time, this coupling of internal dissent and growing external disapproval of the SPDC furthers the likelihood of reform and development at a pace unimaginable prior to the introduction of ICT technology.

C.   IN PURSUIT OF DEVELOPMENT

Myanmar ICT policies exemplify the limits of technologically enabled globalization and provide evidence for Ghemawat's argument about semi-globalization and the continued importance of borders in the near term.[106] That is, a development or state building strategy founded on global or regional standardization does not bode well with authoritarian parties such as the SPDC who seek to maintain power through a set of norms and practices unique among the more liberal polities of the region. The inability and unwillingness of the SPDC to conform to an internationally accepted framework of ICT development serves as a constraint for development, while at the same time reinforces the monopoly of state sanctioned control over the population. As Nina Hachigian states in *The Internet and Power in One-party East Asian States*, "any incremental growth from ICT is not worth the political risk to regimes that rely on controlling information dissemination to the public."[107] This constraint for development appears in many forms such as discouraging foreign investment through a lack of

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[103] Lisa B Brooten, *Global Communications, local conceptions: Human Rights and the politics of Communication among the Burmese Opposition-in-Exile*, 157-206.

[104] Nina Hachigian, *The Internet and Power in One-Party East Asian States*, 45.

[105] Andrew L. Shapiro, *The Control Revolution* (New York, NY: Publicaffairs, 1999), 50.

[106] Pankaj Ghemawat, *Redefining Global Strategy* (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), 14-15.

[107] Nina Hachigian, "The Internet and Power in One-Party East Asian States," 46.

available ICT infrastructure to facilitate efficient business practices.[108]   With such a monopoly on power and information, the SPDC is able to remain corrupt and further a poor human rights record due to the extent of their control over the development of ICT.

The SPDC balances the undertones of dissent with state sanctioned attempts at modernization in order to appeal to broad popular support utilizing ICT to facilitate social services such as education and enhancing connectivity. The SPDC has undertaken many modernization projects and innovation creating approaches to expand ICT infrastructure in order to further development. For example, a fiber optic cable has been laid connecting Yangon and Mandalay with plans to eventually link all major cities in Myanmar.[109]   The MTC has also begun pilot programs establishing domestic long distance telephone calls through domestic satellite service.[110] Government agencies also have the capability to conduct procurements via the Internet from all levels of sourcing in order to promote efficiency.[111]   These steps may collectively increase participation in government and could provide the space to foster liberal advancements towards less authoritarian rule.

These ICT policies of the SPDC also promote an extensive amount of self-imposed isolation allowing the state to narrowly focus the development of state partnerships with those regional states whose interests and goals may align with their own. This may explain the developing relationship between China and Myanmar occurring without much interference from the international community due to the exclusivity of the two states, China's commercial interests in Myanmar, and China's position on the UN Security Council.[112]   The authoritarian nature of the SPDC has fostered this bilateral relationship with China by reducing the number of state and economic stakeholders involved.

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[108] Nina Hachigian, "The Internet and Power in One-Party East Asian States," 46.

[109] Win, "Myanmar," *Digital Review of Asia Pacific*, 147.

[110] Ibid., 147.

[111] Ibid., 148.

[112] "Keeping the Flame Alight," *The Economist*, April 12, 2008, 14-15.

D.   CONCLUSION

Myanmar is one of the most authoritarian states in the world and the government is viewed by most observers as harsh and unstable. The Failed State Index for 2008 ranks Myanmar 12 out of 177 in terms of state instability.[113] Despite its high level of instability the government of Myanmar (SPDC) has demonstrated a tremendous amount of resilience in the face of significant internal and international pressure to improve human rights and move towards liberal democracy. A major reason for the staying power of the SPDC is their monopoly on both power and information. Its implementation of restrictive ICT policies and ICT development plans reinforces the state monopoly on information. By pursuing these policies, the SPDC seeks to maintain the status quo while at the same time furthering the form of economic development of their choosing, with regional partnerships free of open market stakeholder interference. In this way, the SPDC is able to maintain their hold on power, which for the government is more important than some abstract notion of political stability. This is done at the expense of individual freedoms through the strict management of all facets of ICT infrastructure and ICT policy. This results in a clash between the desire by the state for autonomy or isolation and the push by ICT introduction for connectivity at the regional or global level.

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[113] The Fund for Peace, *Failed State Index*,
http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=292&Itemid=452 (accessed November 13, 2008).

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V.   MALAYSIA

The previous chapter focused on Myanmar and the relationship between political stability and the ICT policy practiced by the military junta. This chapter will explore the same themes of political stability and ICT policy with a focus on Malaysia. Malaysia is a one party state ruled with all the formal mechanisms and institutions of a constitutional democracy. Like Burma/Myanmar, what became Malaysia also experienced a relatively long period of formal and informal English colonial rule. The English colonial period for Malaysia extended from 1824 until 1963.[114] During this period, what would become Malaysia absorbed many of the governmental traditions of the British such as the practice of common law.[115] Unlike in Myanmar where the military junta promoted restrictive ICT policies from the onset, Malaysia began with minimal restrictions on the content and access of ICT; however, over the years successive governments have introduced measures to limit the freedoms enjoyed by the population in regards to access and content. This trend provides some insight into political stability in Malaysia as the government manages the expectations of an ethnically diverse constituency.

Malaysia is an important case study because it serves as an example for those who argue ICT can contribute or reinforce state development and facilitate globalizing economies. The lack of restriction on ICT in Malaysia stands in significant contrast to Myanmar. Does the policy framework then, used by the government of Malaysia to govern the role of ICT contribute to the goals of political stability and/or development? This case study demonstrates a number of key issues. First, it draws attention to the importance of ICT policy in generating and maintaining ICT infrastructure. Second, as recent events in Malaysia have demonstrated, an amount of political risk is assumed in the liberalizing of ICT policy. The challenge for Malaysia lies in the ability of the

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[114] Britain gained possession of Malaya from the Dutch in 1824, officially, as there existed a British presence prior to this. There was a break in British colonial rule during the Japanese occupation 1941-1945. The Federation of Malaya gained independence from the British in 1957. Sarawak and Sabah joined the Federation of Malaya in 1963 forming Malaysia. U.S. State Department, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2777.htm (accessed June 3, 2008).

[115] U.S. Department of State, *Background note: Malaysia (*Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2007), http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2777.htm (accessed June 5, 2008).

government to lure investment in order to increase ICT capacity, while simultaneously managing the recent growth of organized dissent among the Islamic population without invoking the perception of a targeted reduction in civil liberties.

A.   MALAYSIA: A BRIEF BACKGROUND

Malaysia is a federation of thirteen states mainly consisting of Malay, Chinese, and Indian ethnicities. The cultural diversity runs deep due to the geographical disposition of the population across the Malay Peninsula and the island of Borneo. A shared history of British colonial rule is arguably the only historical precedence for political, economic, and cultural commonality. Uniting such a diverse political landscape posed a significant challenge for the government in the process of creating a Malaysian identity. The containment and reduction of insurgency in the years prior to the British departure created a sense of 'combat-fatigue' among the population, thereby planting the seeds for the necessity of a strong central government. James Scott describes the prevailing popular desire for a strong central government in post-emergency Malaysia (1948-1957/60) and after the consolidation of power by noting that "the long shadow of violence has thus contributed to the fear that the stability that now exists is a tenuous achievement—that security and order could easily collapse."[116]

The perceived success of political stability did come without cost as Malaysia experienced a painful transition to an independent state that included a Communist insurgency that sought, unsuccessfully to build up support beyond its core base of ethnic Chinese.[117] In the wake of the emergency era, the government pursued an aggressive policy to raise production levels of agrarian stock, further diversify the economy, and improve social services in order to offset the abundance of poverty due to a reliance on agricultural sustainment and rapid population growth.[118] In 1971, the government introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP) with the two fold objectives of poverty

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[116] James C. Scott, *Political Ideology in Malaysia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968) ,78.

[117] Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991* (New York, NY: Cambridge University press, 2001), 115-118.

[118] Kevin Young, Willem C.F. Bussink, and Parvez Hasan, *Malaysia: Growth and Equity in a Multiracial Society* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1980), 4.

eradication and reduction of socio-economic disparity along racial lines.[119] Due to the expected decrease in potential for growth in the production sector, the New Economic Policy recognized "the need for rapid growth in the modern sector" as the only viable solution for the attainment of these national objectives.[120] The NEP was in turn followed by the National Development Policy (NDP) in 1991, which expanded upon the unity and poverty reduction strategies of the NEP while emphasizing a shift to embrace growth managed by the private sector.[121]

The economic successes of the 1970-1980s, the financial crisis of 1990s, and the present surge of national investment in technological development, has provided a record of economic resiliency for the central government of Malaysia. Additionally, the presence of significant economic disparity among the population of Malaysia has exposed the limits of liberal policy against the backdrop of maintaining political stability at the expense of this instituted liberalism. The capacities for government to achieve such aims are strengthened due to the executive dominance enhancing the efficacy of the state role in development.[122]

The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) is the dominant political party in the Barisan Nasional (BN) and has been ruling the country through an accommodation system since independence.[123] Technically, considered a democracy, Malaysia is governed more accurately as a quasi-authoritarian state due to the BN's grip on the parliamentary system.[124] The BN government has introduced numerous policies in order to strengthen their position as the ruling coalition such as discontinuing municipal elections and utilizing their monopoly on the media to process disinformation

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[119] Young, Bussink, and Hasan, *Malaysia: Growth and Equity in a Multiracial Society*, 5.

[120] Ibid., 5.

[121] Edmund Terence Gomez and Jomo K.S., *Malaysia's Political Economy: Politics, Patronage, and Profits* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 173.

[122] Ibid., 4-5.

[123] Vidhu Verma, *Malaysia: State and Civil Society in Transition* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2002), 9.

[124] Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2003), 51.

campaigns against political opposition.[125] The UMNO then, delicately manages an alliance reflecting the diverse cross section of the Malaysian demographic landscape.

B.   MALAYSIA'S ICT POLICY, "OF THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE, FOR NOW…"

Malaysia's contemporary ICT policy is focused on serving as the cornerstone for a broader social and economic development plan. This policy represents "an increasing shift from control to regulation, with an emphasis on accountability and transparency."[126] In this way, Malaysia has demonstrated the strategic foresight necessary in producing policy advantageous towards state development and regional relevance. Malaysia demonstrates the benefits of practicing widely distributed growth-enhancing policies coupled with the legitimate assurance from the state of shared growth dividends among both business and the individual.[127] Unlike many states in various stages of development, Malaysia bet the house on a singular vision reflected in the reliance of the state on the success of the technology sector. This began in the form of policy development and implementation designed to "help Malaysia leapfrog from an industrial society to a post-industrial one, by passing the 'developed society' phase."[128] This is accomplished by embracing a "geographical accumulation strategy to promote and regulate industrial restructuring within major urban areas," thereby demonstrating state recognition of urban-regional development as paramount under the auspice of globalization.[129]

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[125] Edmund Terence Gomez and Jomo K.S., *Malaysia's Political Economy: Politics, Patronage, and Profits* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3.

[126] G. Shabbir Cheema, "Inclusive Governance and Democracy in Asia: Transitions and Challenges," in Dennis A. Rondinelli and John M. Heffron, eds., *Globalization and Change in Asia (*Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Piblishers Inc., 2007), 153.

[127] Mark T. Berger, *The Battle for Asia from Decolonization to Globalization* (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 165.

[128] Dr Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen, *National ICT Policy Planning and Strategic Intervention in Malaysia* (Malaysia: MIMOS Berhad, 2004), http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/CAFRAD/UNPAN016355.pdf (accessed June 12, 2008).

[129] Tim Bunnell, *Malaysia, Modernity, and the Multimedia Super Corridor: A Critical Geography of Intelligent Landscapes* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 25.

Malaysia's Internet penetration rate was 37.9 percent with an Internet user growth rate of 302.8 percent as of March 2008.[130] Additionally, Malaysia has experienced a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of -1.6% in main telephone lines and a CAGR of 21.4% in mobile cellular subscribers from 2001 through 2006.[131] The Malaysian government has underlined the 'success' of their policy initiatives by stating that their "telecommunications network is more advanced than any other in South East Asia with the exception of Singapore."[132] The majority of this effort is conducted or managed by Telekom Malaysia (TM), the present day embodiment of the Malayan Telecommunications Department (MTD). The MTD was originally formed in 1946 and served as a state owned monopoly until 1994.[133] Since then, Malaysia has allowed the introduction of competitors, but TM still maintains more than a 95% share of the market.[134]

Malaysia's main ICT focus is promoted as Malaysia's Vision 2020. "First announced in February 1991, Vision 2020 mapped out the Malaysian government's intention to engage in a large scale process of national development and wealth creation."[135] This would in turn enable Malaysia to achieve the goal of recognition as a 'fully developed country' by the year 2020.[136] Vision 2020 is further projected as "one of the most aggressive and comprehensive ICT plans in the world, and faces one of the greatest challenges: using ICT to address the economic development hurdles of a highly

[130] Internet World Stats, Asia *Internet Usage and Population* (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2008) http://www.Internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm#asia (accessed April 15, 2008).

[131] International Telecommunication Union, *ICT Statistics* (Place des Nations, Switzerland: ICTU, 2008), http://www.itu.int/ICTU-D/ICTEYE/Reports.aspx# (accessed April 15, 2008).

[132] "Malaysia Telecomm Overview," *Malaysia Information and Communication Technology,* http://www.american.edu/initeb/ym6974a/telecom.htm (accessed June 3, 2008).

[133] Telekom Malaysia Corporate Profile, http://www.tm.com.my/about-tm/corporate-profile/corporate-profile.asp (accessed June 7, 2008).

[134] "Key Players," *Malaysia Information and Communication Technology,* http://www.american.edu/initeb/ym6974a/telecom.htm (accessed June 3, 2008).

[135] Mark T. Berger, *The Battle for Asia: From Decolonization to Globalization* (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 185.

[136] Edmund Terence Gomez and Jomo K.S., *Malaysia's Political Economy: Politics, Patronage, and Profits* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 169.

rural developing country."[137] These challenges have proven formidable to the Malaysian government in their effort to meet the expectations of the rural population and have been addressed through tremendous levels of investment in educational infrastructure to further develop internal access and innovation.[138] This national project has led to many major developmental policy initiatives, including the ambitious state endeavor known as the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Dr Mahathir Mohamad publicly declared a national project to foster the growth of information and multimedia technology known as the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) in August 1996.[139] The MSC would become a geographic focal point serving as the regional base for high tech corporations and an enabling environment fostering the emerging innovations of the technology sector.[140] The Malaysian government has worked at length to promote the MSC, creating a Bill of Guarantees meant to protect ICT growth from policy. The Bill of Guarantees is comprised of ten statutes designed to augment the promotion of the MSC, including unrestricted employment of local and foreign knowledge workers and the assurance of no Internet censorship.[141] This is in stark contrast to the careful control of print and television media by the Malaysian government.[142] The impact of this un-restrictive policy and the unrelenting pursuit of ICT development have placed the Malaysian government in a difficult position. For example, the persistent theme of exclusion among everyday Malaysians in benefiting from this path to modernity and participating in the

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[137] Indran Ratnathicam, *.my* (Harvard University) http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/itg/libpubs/Malaysia.pdf (accessed June 6, 2008).

[138] "The Malaysia Smart School Project," *Case Study One on ICT Integration into Education in Malaysia,* http://www2.unescobkk.org/education/ict/resources/JFICT/schoolnet/case_studies/Malaysia_ICT.doc (accessed May 27, 2008), 1.

[139] Tim Bunnell, *Malaysia, Modernity, and the Multimedia Super Corridor: A Critical Geography of Intelligent Landscapes* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 1.

[140] Ibid., 1.

[141] MSC Malaysia, "Bill of Guarantees," http://www.mscmalaysia.my/topic/12073058097925#bog (accessed June 13, 2008).

[142] Nina Hachigian, "The Internet and Power in One-Party East Asian States," *The Washington Quarterly 25:3* (Washington DC: The Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 53.

decision-making process working to transform their society and livelihood reinforces underpinned feelings of discontent among major segments of the indigenous population.[143] The government's management of this perceived exclusivity must result in tangible action versus rhetoric or face the possibility of isolating large segments of their population on the periphery of the MSC, thereby physically bounding both the breadth and depth of Malaysia's national vision of a knowledge society.

C. INTRODUCED RESTRICTION AND THE PURSUIT OF EXTENDED STABILITY

The experience of Malaysia has demonstrated the tendency to cede some level of control by the state relative to the rise of a knowledge-based economy under one-party rule or an authoritarian state. Figure 5 demonstrates the drop and recovery from the Asian market crisis in political stability witnessed during the corresponding growth in ICT showing Malaysia ranked in the 65.4 percentile in 1996, and subsequently slipping to the 58.7 percentile of politically stable countries by 2006.[144]

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[143] Tim Bunnell, *Malaysia, Modernity, and the Multimedia Super Corridor: A Critical Geography of Intelligent Landscapes* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 119.

[144] Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, *Governance Matters VI: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators 1996-2006,* http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi2007/sc_chart.asp# (accessed May 18, 2008).

Figure 4.   Malaysia Political Stability 1996-2006[145]

MALAYSIA (Percentile Rank (0-100))

— Political Stability
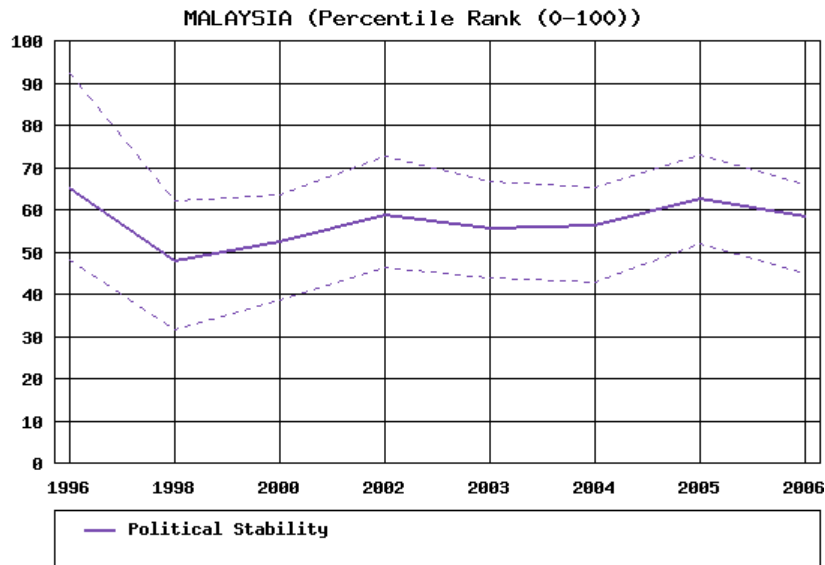
The current trend in political stability is of course due to numerous challenges concerning the process of governance. One of the most significant challenges facing the government of Malaysia in their pursuit of technologically based development is the resultant exclusivity of marginalized population and the perceived inability of Malays to exercise control over the forces which shape their lives.   Muslims are one such demographic receiving significant attention as of late due to the rising level of Islamic extremism witnessed in the Asia Pacific region and the transnational spread of associated violence.   This may be explained by the dynamics occurring in managing the social conflict experienced during the politicization of Islam in a state such as Malaysia, which promotes secular ideals in order to enhance development, while at the same time promoting the inclusion of the influential Muslim community.   The Malaysian government is constantly trying to balance formal secularism against the demands of political Islam. Zachary Abuza notes that "Islam has always been under state control in Malaysia, and the ulamas have always chafed at having *sharia* law being superseded by

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[145] Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi, *Governance Matters VI: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators 1996-2006.*

secular law."[146]   Political Islam in Malaysia has recently embraced the network and communication enablers provided by ICT.   The recent downward trend in political stability correlates then with the government's current exploratory methods aimed at the control of ICT access and content to circumvent and contain the religious vent of the rural based populations and their fundamentalist ideals. At present, Malaysia is pursuing exploratory methods in order to introduce new communication and content laws in order to control the spread of "disharmony, chaos, seditious material, and lies,"[147] currently occurring on the Internet with the intent to undermine the control of the state.

D.   CONCLUSION

Malaysia serves to reinforce the notion of an increasingly highly connected global structure in which ICT plays an ever-growing role. The maintenance of state stability in Malaysia relies heavily on the success of the national ICT project promoted by the state. Challenges inherent in this national project such as exclusivity and wealth diffusion are not unique to development, and must be mitigated through policy directed at a growing middle class subject to one party rule. Additionally, careful negotiation of the civil liberty realities wrought from the introduction of measured policy to control the advantages ICT provides to extremist groups must be traversed as the government continues on the path toward becoming a knowledge based society. The government of Malaysia must act and practice governance to meet the expectations of their stated visions concerning ICT development for both the population and the foreign investment it desires to attract, or inevitably succumb to the authoritarian practices necessary to control popular dissent should these expectations prove fruitless.   The case of Malaysia demonstrates the vital importance of local policy in spite of the perceived decreasing relevance of the state within the context of globalization. Malaysia then, is an example of where the successful expansion and deepening of ICT and the maintenance of political stability are directly connected.

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[146] Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2003), 58.

[147] "Malaysia mulls Internet laws against bloggers: Report," *The Sydney Morning Herald,* December 3, 2006, http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2006/12/03/1165080808893.html (accessed June 13, 2008).

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VI.   REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Since at least the end of the Cold War regional economic and political initiatives have emerged as part of either an effort to advance globalization and/or to mitigate the impact globalization has had on the sovereign nation-state. Regional organizations have, to varying degrees, allowed nation-states to strengthen their position in a globalizing world, while providing a transitional framework for the standardization and other aspects of globalization at a sub-global and a transnational level. Regional integration and standardization enables connectivity to occur along regional lines, while still facilitating the U.S.-led globalization project. However, like globalization, regional organizations and regional integration has been very uneven, and those parts of the world where states are weak or failing are also usually those parts of the world where regional organizations are also weakest or completely absent.

This chapter builds upon the concern in previous chapters in which the importance of state building to globalization was emphasized via a close examination of the relationship between ICT and political stability. This chapter argues that one of the key ways in which state building can be best facilitated is via the use or creation of regional organizations or frameworks. It begins by emphasizing that there is more than ever a need for regional solutions, and then sets out to shift state-building policy design away from crisis response towards emerging state assistance and state building within a regional framework. The chapter highlights the advantages of a regional framework for assisting emerging states and state building via the use of the Hourglass Model. This Model, it is suggested, can provide a framework for policy design. It is argued that a regional approach to state building harnesses those attributes of globalization, such as standardization, to the need to garner or retain national and local sovereignty on the part of the majority of the population. Finally, upon establishing a viable construct for the utility of the regional framework, the chapter makes clear how ICT provides one of the necessary enablers so that we can actually apply the regional approach to state building.

A.   ALL PROBLEMS ARE REGIONAL

There are numerous contemporary examples of state crises, state collapse and state failure such as Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan, that are clearly best understood and addressed as regional problems.[148] In each case, a reactive crisis response approach was utilized to deal with insecurity, and promote state building with little or no input, not only from the people who lived within the borders of the state concerned, but also from the nation-states in the immediate region and/or their citizens. As each new crisis demonstrates, a policy focus on the individual state can lead to a certain degree of capacity building, but soon becomes constrained by an inability to "change the basic motivations or objectives of the local states."[149]

This approach is also flawed as the problems generated by the state in crisis spill across its territorial borders. As one author has observed, "(t)he domain of the state is seen to be one of accommodation and contest by innumerable and contending sites of power embedded in society at the regional and sub-regional levels."[150] State crises quickly move to regional levels due to the degree of connectivity between the state and other regional members. In other cases, the origins of the crisis lay at the regional level, until a member state provides the proper mix of facilitating factors necessary to generate crisis. As a result, a change in economic policy, the level of political stability, and social change occurring within the state all have profound impacts upon the region as a whole. As the President of the United States observed in 2002 in the formal and generally annual *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*: "(i)n an increasingly interconnected world, regional crises can strain our alliances, rekindles rivalries among the major powers, and create horrifying affronts to human dignity."[151] Benjamin Miller, in *States, Nations, and the Great Powers,* defines a region as a construct based on two

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[148] Barnett R. Rubin and Ahmed Rashid, "From Great Game to Grand Bargain" *Foreign Affairs*, vol, 87, no, 6, November/December 2008.

[149] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 14.

[150] Quote attributed to Ayesha Jalal appearing in Mary P. Callahan, *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 12.

[151] Office of the President, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America September 2002* (Washington DC: Office of the President, 2002), 9.

conditions: "(1) a certain degree of geographical proximity and (2) strategic interaction or security interdependence."[152] This definition of a region suggests a level of social and political connectivity already available as a resource for security and development. The crucial importance of the regional approach is that it offers a more realistic understanding of the dynamics and implications of a particular state crisis, setting it in a regional context, which is a more appropriate organizational level at which to deal with the crisis and to engage in one or more state-building projects.

B.   FAILING, FAILED, OR SIMPLY EMERGING?

State building as crisis response is not conducive to achieving long term success, nor does it capture the regional character of the problems that underpin most failing or failed states. In fact, terms such as 'failing' or 'failed' states, or 'reconstruction', add to the perception that there was once a viable, even strong state in place. In fact, while some failing states may have possessed far more capacity in the past, there are just as many that have been weak and failing since they gained independence if we are talking about former colonies, or were never unified nation-states in the case of buffer states such as Afghanistan. The starting point then is to recognize that many states labeled as failed or failing were never stable self-sustaining entities of governance to begin with. That is, there never existed a compact between the government and its constituents/citizens, let alone a functioning compact between the particular state concerned and the international community. Additionally, reconstruction assumes there was once 'something' in place to reconstruct. States exist at varying levels of development or a lack thereof.

A terminology that captures the challenges associated with state building and the long-term strategic foresight necessary for success is desperately needed. A term such as 'emerging state' is more accurate than failed state and also sets to one side issues of 'nation' versus 'region' and focuses on the more immediate need to engage in creating institutional capacity for the delivery of security and development at all levels, from the local to the regional. Benchmarks and incentives could thus be provided to the emerging

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[152] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 41.

state and regional players in order to facilitate a multi-lateral design with a unilateral direction conducive to achieving long-term development. This shift in emphasis towards the region might also help embed more long-term measures and goals for success instead of the short-term political calculus that so often informs the theory and practice of state building. The regional framework for state building should take a long-term approach, shifting the focus from crisis response to sustained practices and a regional body designed to coordinate resources and policy while addressing the local realities that are central to successful state building.

C.   REGIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR EMERGING STATE ASSISTANCE

Figure 5.   Hourglass Model

Hourglass Model
Regional Framework for Emerging State Assistance
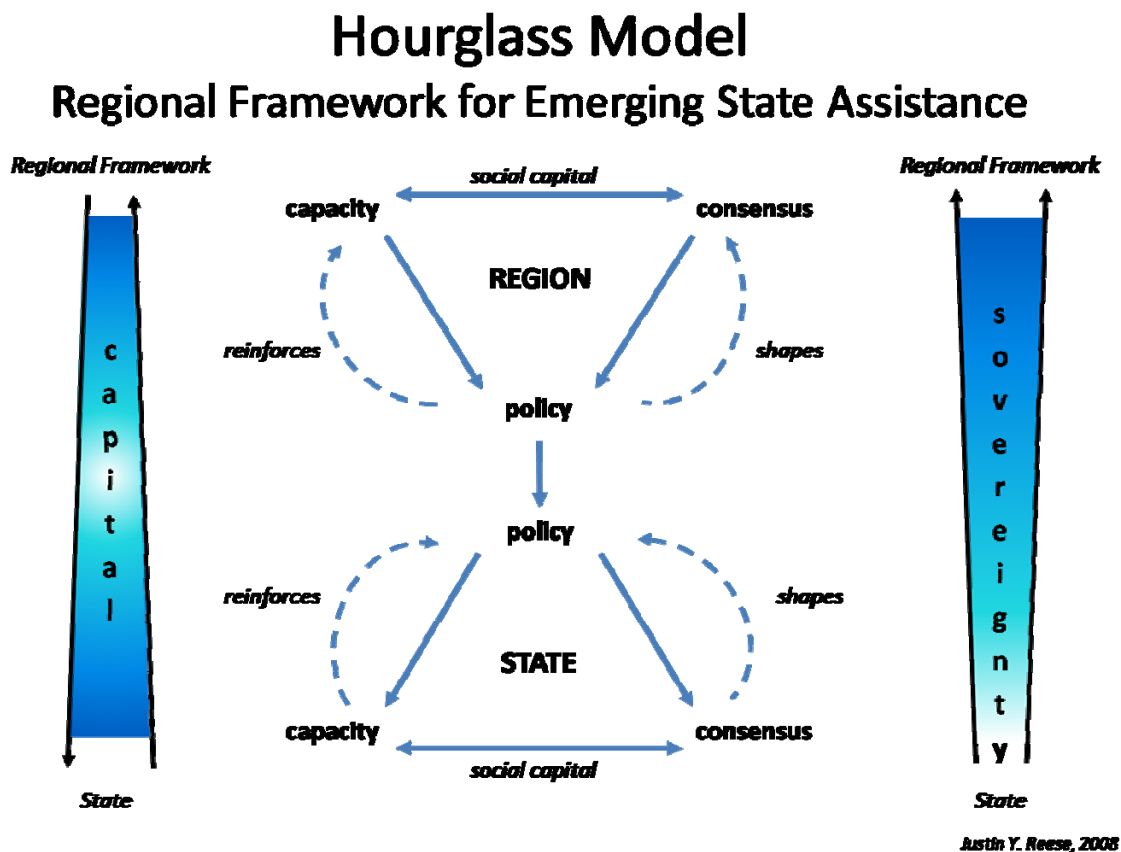
The **REGION** represents those states with strategic interaction and geographic proximity to the 'emerging state'.[153]   At the regional level, **capacity** represents the pooled resource capacity of the region consisting mainly of the fiscal, institutional, and economic capability member states may possess to contribute to the advancement of the state-building project. **Consensus** represents cooperative action at the regional level of governance as well as the degree of popular support among the domestic constituency of each member state. The relationship between **consensus** and **capacity**, or in other words, organized cooperation for growth represents the amount of *social capital* available.[154] Additionally, contributions from Great Powers, or international organizations, for 'emerging states' in relation to both **capacity** and **consensus** are rolled up as regional attributes falling under the respective domain of either political support (**consensus**) or investment/aid to include security force assistance (**capacity**). The amount of **capacity** and **consensus** drives the formulation of **policy**. At the same time, ideally, **policy** is derived from multilateral involvement but leads to unilateral direction. Ultimately, this is still a top down formulation for state building, but one with attentiveness to local concerns and set in a regional framework. The success of the overall **policy** for 'emerging state' assistance further serves to *reinforce* **capacity** through creating conditions for the expansion of **capacity** across the region. Successful **policy** also serves to further *shape* regional **consensus** as the people in both the key crisis zones and the region as a whole begin to receive the benefits from stability, security and development.

The **state** represents the level at which this **policy** is implemented to generate both domestic **capacity** and **consensus**. This occurs in a multitude of ways such as political reconciliation and constitutional development serving to strengthen the legitimacy of the government in order to build **consensus**. Additionally, infrastructure, institutional and economic policies may serve to build the **capacity** of the emerging state.

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[153] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), xx, 41.

[154] Social capital carries many different connotations and definitional structures mainly qualitative in nature. Social capital as portrayed by the Hourglass Model is meant to represent, "the bonds of social reciprocity that facilitated production," and relies on the economic and civic cooperation of the group for the sake of production and growth. This variation of social capital in discussed in detail in; Francis Fukuyama, "Social Capital," in Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington, eds., *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000), 100.

These processes serve to create and build upon the resulting *social capital* of the emerging state. **Policy** at the **state** level is also *reinforced* from increased **capacity** and additionally *shaped* by the **consensus** of the population. This suggests that **state** policy must be flexible due to the dynamic character of these processes. The Hourglass Model also draws attention to the need for a reciprocal flow of capital with higher levels of capital obviously flowing into the emerging state, and the shifting of a certain degree of sovereignty upwards from the state to the regional framework. At the same time the regional framework needs to be organized in a fashion that ensures it receives policy input from the national and local level through channels that are open and understood by all concerned. The major attribute of a regional framework is its potential ability to generate security and development utilizing both existing and new linkages among member states and other groups in the region.

The utility of a regional approach to state building is reinforced by Benjamin Miller's emphasis on the importance and vigor of the dynamics of any given region:

> Regional dynamics are shaped by patterns of relations among regional states (notably, those of amity and enmity), by the nature of the regional conflicts (ideological, territorial, nationalist, hegemonic, security dilemma, etc.), and by the domestic attributes of the local states (democratic or authoritarian regimes, state-society relations, and the demands of state-building and nation-building, regime stability, and elite security).[155]

The regional framework takes advantage of both the geographical proximity and international connectivity critical in ensuring sustained political will for the state-building project, while not losing sight of the specific needs of any given locality. The Hourglass Model also affords the management of resource and time to regional governance. The model seeks to address many of the current challenges to state building by clear delineations of authority, the pooled capacity of a region, and the fundamental importance of working towards consensus for regional stability and growth. Regardless of how intractable the problems might be getting all the stakeholders, high and low, talking is a crucial first step and it has to take place at the regional level and also bring in

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[155] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 25.

actors from outside the region if they are relevant to the process. It needs to rely from the outset on the cooperation of member states which, regardless of their national and often self-aggrandizing agendas, it is assumed can establish a base line around agreeing to seek progressive stability and security and the creation of additional markets for commerce with a general view that there is a need to move towards an improvement in development broadly understood.

Focused policy design and implementation are necessary in order to balance the interaction among regional member states with their competing domestic requirements. Multilateralism is an inherent component of the regional framework, while working towards the promotion of a clearly defined single direction vital for emerging state assistance.[156] A unilateral direction would address the unity of command challenges so prevalent in contemporary state-building endeavors such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

The critical component of the regional framework is the necessity for expanded time horizons due to the long term character of success in state building. The Hourglass Model in Figure 6 is built upon the importance of seeing this as both a medium and long term process. The implied change inherent in this model is that the regional framework or organization sets the timeline and controls the acquisition and distribution of resources for security and development. This approach is in stark contrast to the current, often poorly managed Great Power-led and private sector and NGO executed state-building endeavors that are taking place in various parts of the world.

D. HARNESSING STANDARDIZATION TO ENABLE EFFICIENCIES

The standardized policies of contemporary globalization generate friction when they are unable to accommodate local processes and often generate wealth accumulation among elites without any discernable benefits to the majority of the population. A regional framework for emerging state assistance should address the latter problem at the same time as it promotes standardization at the regional level in order to maximize

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[156] Multilateralism defined as, "the practice and principle of three or more states committing to collective action, according to established rules, to address common problems and opportunities." Edward Newman, *A Crisis of Global Institutions? Multilateralism and international security* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 10.

efficiency among member states. This may occur in areas such as economic policy, infrastructure development, and security functions. A transition to a single currency, shared distribution of industry, and regional programs to alleviate poverty are just a few economic programs that could generate economic promise against the backdrop of a regional commitment to security and development. There would no longer various NGOs and aid organizations running funds and projects through different and/or competing social groups and/or state institutions without being part of a general bottom-up regional framework with a clear overall goal in relation to security and development. In other words, not only would a state shift sovereignty to a regional framework, but the aid organizations of the world would shift their funds and agendas to the region for directed disbursement to the emerging state, at the same time as they would continue to have a say in what the primary objectives should be.

An emerging state in many cases requires the capacity building that only a regional framework can deliver. For example, the construction of road, rail, air, and port infrastructure needs to be designed to ensure compatibility within the regional context and beyond. Capacity is also distributed from the region to the emerging state through technology transfer and job creation in the form of policies aimed at creating or improving upon capacities within the emerging state. The focus on infrastructure and institutional development through investment with oversight by the regional body is important. The success or failure becomes the responsibility of the regional body instead of international agencies or multinational corporations. This shift in accountability allows for the introduction of regionalizing and globalizing mechanisms to serve state-building agendas without delegitimizing the role of the state in delivering goods and services to the populace.

Security provisions such as a non-aggression pact or security assistance grounded in a regional framework may provide the critical time and space necessary for the political and institutional development of an emerging state. Additionally, the pursuit of common platforms for offensive and defensive capabilities produces cost benefits for all member states and facilitates inter-operability in the conduct of security measures. Regional security forces could help create the conditions necessary for capacity,

consensus, and political development in an emerging state. Occupation of some sort is an initial requirement of security, and may generate less friction if conducted via the right mix of regional forces. These regional security forces would act under regional directives in order to promote stability through the removal of rival power structures thereby providing the space for the development of local security apparatuses. Cooperation at this level is not utopian. It may require a certain degree of vision and a serious level of commitment, but it also represents an effective strategy for assisting emerging states and enhancing stability in the region as a whole.

E.   PROTECTING THE UNIQUENESS OF SOVEREIGNTY

A recent trend in the literature concerning state building has been to focus on local development, and/or bottom-up state building. Seth Kaplan, in *Fixing Fragile States,* emphasizes, "redesigning governing bodies to better fit local conditions—that is, connecting the state with its surrounding society—….to win legitimacy, develop competency, and encourage investment, the rule of law, and the other ingredients necessary to foster a self-sustaining, internally driven process that will lead to development."[157]   Kaplan's ten guiding principles for the reform of "fragile states" focuses on policies tailored for local conditions and on the necessity for regional participation. Kaplan's work hints at regional solutions throughout, but does not actually explore them in any detail. The local does matter, and a regional framework designed to promote emerging state assistance must address the local variables in order to avoid cookie cutter solutions to state-building projects.

At the same time, the region is crucial for local success. And in order for regional bodies concerned with security and development to work, sovereignty will need to be shifted downwards to the local in some contexts and upwards to the region in others. The regional framework, in turn, serves members well when demonstrating the "capacity to shape conceptions of 'normal' in international affairs in line with its unique normative

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[157] Seth D. Kaplan, *Fixing Fragile States: A New Paradigm for Development* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008), 9.

basis," as demonstrated by the European Union (EU) model.[158]   That is, the regional approach works to standardize those processes which promote cooperation while at the same time shaping the normative functions of members to produce regional norms which still allow for both regional and sub-regional differences.

The Hourglass Model relies on the shifting of sovereignty from the state to a regional body or framework. The state, though, must still maintain a level of sovereignty to develop institutions unique to the more local social conditions, and exercise governance under a mandate provided by the constituent population. Richard Caplan describes this pursuit of balance between "international authority and local ownership of the processes of governance," in *International Governance of War-Torn Territories*.[159] Although Caplan's writing emphasizes the 'international' many of the functional characteristic he describes apply to the need for a balance between the sovereignty of the 'regional' framework versus the national and the local.

F.   ICT ALLOWS REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS AN UNPRECEDENTED REALITY

Regional frameworks are not new. There are numerous historical precedents. What is new, at this juncture, is the potential utility of ICT and the transfer of technology among states as one of the main enablers for regional frameworks and emerging states.

ICT facilitates just about every aspect of contemporary state building. For example, ICT is central to the way in which global enterprises generate innovation and institutions. They act as "agents of commercialization for new technology (both organizational and mechanical) worldwide," which is necessary to the rapid implementation of state-building projects.[160] Additionally, ICT presents the capability of Group Support Systems (GSS) to governance thereby, "improving organizational

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[158] Michael Merlingen with Rasa Ostrauskaite, *European Union Peacebuilding and Policing* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 15.

[159] Richard Caplan, *International Governance of War-Torn Territories: Rule and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 190.

[160] Ian H. Rowlands, "Transnational Corporations and Global Environmental Politics," in Daphne Josselin and William Wallace, eds., *Non-State Actors in World Politics* (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2001), 133.

effectiveness through their abilities to reduce communication barriers, increase productivity, and facilitate decision-making activities."[161]   ICT also facilitates the state-building endeavor of the external powers involved by effectively reducing the time for information sharing to real time allowing decision makers to constitute policy.   More broadly, the rapid growth of ICT in both capacity and capability generates tremendous potential "for organizing administration in terms of efficiency, transparency, and accountability."[162]   This is due to the versatility of ICT, with an inherent ability to transcend barriers of geography, allowing users to harness benefits of scale and network effects, while simultaneously facilitating the transfer of knowledge.[163]   For the past few decades, ICT has increasingly come to the fore in shaping both industrial and agriculture production, not to mention political activity and social and cultural life.[164]

The precept of revolutionary technologies enhancing the speed of communication and information sharing is not a new development.   The world has experienced the potential of modern technology with the telegraph of the early nineteenth century and the broadcast capability introduced with the invention of the radio followed by the invention of television.[165]   Each incremental leap in technology is accompanied with the familiar optimistic forecasts for peace, prosperity, and the social advancement of humankind. This is due to the widely held belief that "technology is the fastest medium to increase

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[161] "GSS are social, information technology-based environments that support intellectual group activities either within or across geographical and temporal boundaries to, where (1) Information technology environments encompass communication, computing, and decision support technologies, and include, but are not limited to, distributed facilities, computer hardware and software, audio and video technology, procedures, methodologies, facilitation, and applicable group data, and (2) Intellectual group activites include, but are not limited to, planning, idea generation, problem solving, decision making, issue discussion, negotiation, conflict resolution, and creative or collaborative group activites such as document preparation and sharing." Susan Rebstock Williams and Rick L. Wilson, "Group Support Systems, Power, and Influence in an Orgnaization," in Kenneth E. Kendall, ed., *Emerging Information Technologies: Improving Decisions, Cooperation, and Infrastructure* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1999), 177-179.

[162] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States,* 134.

[163] James B. Steinberg, *Information Technology and Development: Beyond ""Either/Or,""* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 2003), http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2003/spring_development_steinberg.aspx (accessed on August 4, 2008).

[164] Mark T. Berger, *The Battle for Asia: From Decolonization to Globalization* (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 121.

[165] Cherie Steele and Arthur Stein, "Communications Revolutions and International Relations," in Juliann E. Allison, ed., *Technology, Development, and Democracy,* 29.

economic outputs of a business or a country."[166]   States generate benefits from connectivity through local agendas designed to transform themselves into knowledge-based societies. ICT also forces the state to focus on those institutional processes in order to fully take advantage of the technological capability. For example, any national investment into ICT infrastructure generates a requirement for immediacy in educational development in order to properly maintain the infrastructure and shed the bonds designed to focus solely on unskilled production and contribute to the innovators of the world. This in turn generates tremendous potential for whatever direction the state-building project wishes to move: establishing or reconstituting an industrial capacity, agricultural production, or a strictly knowledge-based society or a combination of the three.

This suggests developing ICT infrastructure is central to regional efforts seeking to generate security and sustainable economic growth in state-building projects: "a cell phone is a great leap over no phone or a land line. A computer is much more powerful than a calculator or paper notebooks. And the Internet ... that is a resource we are only beginning to leverage."[167]

This approach to ICT and state building must be taken with a dose of reality, as the benefits afforded by technology must be accompanied by health and education in order to maximize the potential for development.[168] ICT, then, is not the sole answer to effective state building, as nothing can replace the involvement of committed human capital. Nevertheless ICT allows the state-building project and regional efforts to move on those ideals of government which are necessary in order to lay the foundations of trust for the 'double compact' discussed earlier. For example, the Aga Khan Foundation experience in Afghanistan as related by Ghani and Lockhart reinforce the notion of

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[166] United States Department of State, "ICT and Telecom; Information Technology Critical in Development, Expert Says," *Africa News* (Washington DC: AllAfrica Inc., October 25, 2006) http://www.lexisnexis.com.libproxy.nps.edu/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?docLinkInd=true &risb=21_T4360434951&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T436 0434954&cisb=22_T4360434953&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=8320&docNo=9 (accessed on August 11, 2008).

[167] Cherie Steele and Arthur Stein, "Communications Revolutions and International Relations," in Juliann E. Allison, ed., *Technology, Development, and Democracy,* 27.

[168] James B. Steinberg, *Information Technology and Development: Beyond "Either/Or,"* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 2003).

success derived from the combination of "financial, human, and intellectual capital enabling a country to connect with global economic, financial, and knowledge flows."[169] The impact of ICT upon state building also has the capacity to lead to disillusionment. For all the advantages ICT brings, it can become a victim of its own expectations as technology runs up against the divergent agendas of multiple stakeholders and a lack of understanding of the capabilities of ICT by the decision makers. This phenomenon was reflected in the presidential election process in Afghanistan in 2004 when authorities decided against an electronic system in favor of an archaic method using cardboard, due to the widespread lack of even a basic understanding of "current trends of information technology."[170] In retrospect, the advances in technology are still bound by human masters and work best when bounded by 'efficiency, transparency, and accountability'.

1.   Efficiency

ICT creates efficiency in the state-building project, set in a regional framework, with the inherent capability to, at a minimum, "overcome one of the greatest constraints in human history—the ability to process large amounts of information and identify patterns."[171] Efficiency, then, is defined in relation to how well ICT is managed and utilized. It goes without saying, ICT creates efficiency in just about every sector that takes advantage of ICT, but in state building, efficiency may be the deciding factor between a successful state-building project, and a "descent into chaos."[172] ICT has the capability to reduce the time required to establish or reconstitute state institutions, paramount in an era where resources committed to foreign projects may become less available due to the political will of those involved. Furthermore, ICT has the ability to enhance productivity in a positive manner as efficiencies increase and local producers are

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[169] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States,* 50.

[170] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States,* 77-78.

[171] Ibid., 9.

[172] Ahmed Rashid, "Descent into Chaos" is the title of recent published work describing the state-building endeavors in the Central Asia region. Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2008).

linked to regional and global markets.[173] One of the first institutions in just about every state-building project is the state educational capacity. Contemporary society places tremendous weight on an education. However, it does no good if the only job awaiting one at the end of a university-level education is a career as an interpreter for an occupying army. Real capacity must be developed, and it must be in the hands of the local population. Education is paramount. Furthermore, it correlates with state needs; the more the state promotes ICT, the more integral it becomes to the state-building project.

2.   Transparency

ICT is inherently transparent. Technology is used to capture data and information and provides access leading to previously unheralded potential for multiple uses. This is both an enabler for free societies and a challenge for authoritarian regimes seeking to maintain a monopoly on the information generated within their societies. ICT, although human engineered, is emotionally unattached. It does not shape data to meet political ends and does not manipulate it to support a particular policy. The use of ICT allows for an 'opening of the books'. This is vital to the state building process due to the information required by the stakeholders. Project oversight is made much more manageable through transparency, while ICT simultaneously allows for monitoring from a distance to further reduce the physical signature of the external stakeholders. Most critical to the state-building project, though, is the natural ability of transparency to reduce the occurrence of corruption or waste. Inflated contracts, siphoning off funds, or just plain poor management of resources are attributes of any state-building project, but these problems can be reduced to manageable levels through a strong infusion of ICT, which, when coupled with a policy of transparency, leads to much greater accountability.

3.   Accountability

In *Fixing Failed States*, Ghani and Lockhart introduce six components of a "National Accountability System," each of which relies heavily on the incorporation of

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[173] James B. Steinberg, *Information Technology and Development: Beyond "Either/Or,"* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 2003).

information technology to produce measures of success.[174] This is based on the efficiency and transparency characteristics of ICT mentioned previously, and can, in theory, provide for accountability by all those involved. Of course this accountability may be mitigated by the state (or more precisely political intervention of various sorts), but in a sector such as the economy, government cannot hide a lack of investment, fiscal mismanagement, and corruption for any significant amount of time, especially during state building when there are numerous interests involved and each relies on accountability being built into the project from the local to the regional. Likewise, governments are also held more accountable as their societies become infused with ICT capability and access. Authoritarian governments are bound by what Christopher Kedzie describes as the "Dictator's Dilemma." By this, he means that those rulers that try to prevent or control ICT in a heavy-handed fashion "to protect their monopoly on power do so at the peril of economic growth within and outside their borders."[175] On the flip side of this, Matthew Baum emphasizes the way ICT contributes to democratic shifts in governance as a result of the accessibility to information by constituents. He argues that ICT actually leads governance towards democracy and peace due the level of scrutiny foreign policy endeavors go through in the modern era.[176] This measure of accountability is important as the political stability of a state-building project encompasses not only the project, but its stakeholders from the local to the regional level.

4.   ICT Challenges for Development with Security

The current capacity of ICT allows many recipients of the state-building project to generate ICT infrastructure at a level that would have been unimaginable just a decade ago. With the incorporation of ICT, the state is under increasing pressure to knock down

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[174] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States,* 196-97.

[175] Christopher R. Kedzie, with Janni Aragon, "Coincident Revolutions and the Dictator's Dilemma," in Juliann Emmons Allison, ed., *Technology, Development, and Democracy: International Conflict and Cooperation in the Information Age* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 123.

[176] Matthew A. Baum, "The Communications Revolution and the Political Use of Force," in Juliann Emmons Allison, ed., *Technology, Development, and Democracy: International Conflict and Cooperation in the Information Age* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 131-59.

walls from the local to the regional and beyond.[177]   State-building projects, such as Afghanistan, are contemporary examples that are benefiting from the recent strides in ICT technology.   University-level education in computer technology, which was unattainable a few years ago, is now up and running in the country — producing graduates with not only a theoretical, but a practical education as well.[178]   This is one example of the ability of ICT to take root, produce revenue, and move forward.[179]

With this in mind, it has become accepted practice for attention to be placed on both the judicial and security apparatuses as paramount to an emerging state or state-building project. So much so, that the perception of having succeeded or failed at state building generally hinges on the ability to generate capacity and capability for the judiciary, the police and the military. ICT applies a whole new dimension to the security framework which must be incorporated into any state-building project. At the same time, the critical infrastructure of the state is grounded in the operation of computers and computer networks resulting in an interconnectedness, which is susceptible to disruption and therefore presents a whole new array of security concerns for the state.[180]

G.   CONCLUSION

Any serious analysis of contemporary state building suggests the need to recast state building within a regional framework at the same time as every effort is made to take into account the local particularities of security and development. Many of the current failures, and future challenges associated with state building, need to be understood in relation to the regional context. Many of the problems that have arisen are due to the 'national' focus of contemporary state building, while often relying on non-regional entities to provide security, capacity building, and political construction. The

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[177] Ronald J. Deibert, "Circuits of Power: Security in the Internet Environment," in James N. Rosenau and J.P. Singh, eds., *Information Technologies and Global Politics: the Changing Scope of Power and Governance* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 119.

[178] Siri B. Uldal and Muhammad A. Marjan, "Computing in Post War Afghanistan," *Communications of the ACM,* Vol. 49, No. 2, 19-24 (New York, NY: ACM, 2006), 21-22.

[179] Ibid., 23.

[180] John Moteff, *Critical Infrastructures: A Primer* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 1998), 2.

creation, or amplification of regional frameworks, with a strong dose of imagination and diplomacy with regard to what groups or individuals are regarded as stakeholders, offers the most realistic solution for successful state building in the future.

Regional cooperation can generate a large pool of capacity, broader consensus for political action, and ideally a more focused policy for consolidating and strengthening emerging states. The monetary system must be compatible with regional and global partners and the telecommunications framework must adhere to relevant frequencies and bandwidth. Meanwhile, diplomats and stakeholders must have somewhere to go to practice diplomacy and discuss priorities and set policy. ICT contributes to all these needs. The Hourglass approach for the provision of emerging state assistance within a regional framework offers a viable method for thinking about and planning state building as well as assessing progress towards, stability, security, prosperity and development.

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VII. CONCLUSION

This thesis set out to explore the role of ICT in promoting development and political stability framed by the growing significance of globalization and decreasing relevance of the nation-state. Chapter II defines contemporary globalization as the U.S.-led effort to form transnational institutions and processes. More specifically, the U.S.-led effort contributes to the deceasing relevance of the nation-state in the ever-increasing sphere of globalization. As a result, globalization has modified the essential role of the nation-state towards managing global flows of resource, capital, and populations rather than, as in the past, presiding over distinct national policies.

With contemporary globalization as the backdrop, the relationship between ICT and political stability was explored in order to determine the existence of a positive, negative, or irrelevant correlation. The relationship between ICT and political stability appeared positive in the Asia Pacific Region for 2007. This positive relationship appears as the projection of Internet penetration figures against corresponding metrics representing state stability for the Asia Pacific Region.

Chapter III outlines the contemporary processes of state building in the post-1945 era. This thesis relies heavily on Ghani and Lockhart's design for the state, consisting of the double compact. This double compact consists of (1) a compact between the state and constituency and (2) between the state and the international community.   ICT demonstrates an ability to enhance the legitimacy for the polity of the state when properly levied by promotional policy. This precept can be seen at work in other contemporary state-building projects such as Afghanistan under the direction of UNDP, which stipulates a weighted focus on ICT to foster sentiment critical for promoting agendas such as the Strengthening State Building through Strategic Government Communication Project. The SSBSGC seeks to "strengthen the drivers of development effectiveness," with an emphasis on "communication channels which promote government accountability and transparency," through increasing key characteristics of ICT such as

effective information flow and access.[181] This inclusion of ICT in state building, "offers an unprecedented chance for developing countries to 'leapfrog' earlier stages of development" and allows the state to connect to a globalized economy.[182] The role of ICT in state building is more than just an enabler, but, managed properly, will drastically reduce the time required to build those lasting institutions necessary for the successful development of the state processes.

The importance of distinct ICT policy design as a contributing factor for both political stability and development is portrayed through case study in both Chapters IV and V. Myanmar and Malaysia were selected due to their shared attributes of: geographical residence in the Asia Pacific Region, one-party rule, and widely opposing views on the design of ICT policy to further political stability and development. Myanmar pursues an exclusive ICT policy design, which furthers the restrictive policies of an authoritarian regime bent on maintaining a monopoly of access to information. Malaysia, on the other hand, has pursued ICT as a pillar of inclusive policy design meant to facilitate an envisioned knowledge-based society reliant on education, innovation, and export-focused technology transfer. Both Myanmar and Malaysia have had to deal with repercussions unique to each policy. Myanmar faces difficulties for development because of the poor perception by the global community, which was generated by preventing ICT access or manipulating the information access allowed. The situation in Myanmar is compounded by the difficulties presented by emerging technologies in maintaining a monopoly upon ICT access. Malaysia, on the other hand, is challenged as a result of some of its own success. Wealth diffusion among the populace is one challenge that must be remedied in order to maintain popular support for their national ICT infrastructure pursuits. Malaysia is also challenged by the active mediums for dissent offered by their inclusive ICT access policies. Reactionary measures that seek to

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[181] Mithulina Chatterjee, *State Building and Government Support Programme: Afghanistan* (Afghanistan: United Nations Development Program Afghanistan Office, June 2008), 31, http://www.undp.org.af/Publications/KeyDocuments/Factsheets/sbgs/SBGS_Fact_Sheet_June08.pdf (accessed on August 15, 2008).

[182] James B. Steinberg, *Information Technology and Development: Beyond "Either/Or,"* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 2003).

stifle dissent may carry damaging repercussions upon their promoted ideals of non-censorship. Myanmar and Malaysia then, demonstrate the importance of policy design in the debate of ICT and political stability.

Chapter VI builds upon the significance of globalization, the relationship between ICT and political stability, and the contemporary state-building practices in offering a regional framework solution to emerging state assistance. The Hourglass Model suggests a regional approach facilitates the double compact of the state by balancing global processes with local policy design.   This is a top-down approach with a genuine incorporation of local conditions for state building. A regional approach to emerging state assistance exists to meet state-building challenges with a more focused policy conduit "first and foremost about facilitating local processes, about leveraging local capacities, and about complementing local actions."[183]   This particular approach to state building is reliant on the region for pooled capacity and cooperative consensus to formulate focused policy. This approach enables the processes of capacity development and consensus building intra-state while further reinforcing the shift of sovereignty upwards from the state to regional accommodations.   The regional framework for emerging state assistance then, reinforces transnational process, makes substantive use of existing ICT, and builds upon ideals of locality to further security and development. The ICT attributes of efficiency, transparency, and accountability serve to legitimize the viability of such as approach.

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[183] Seth D. Kaplan, *Fixing Fragile States: A New Paradigm for Development* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008), 49.

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